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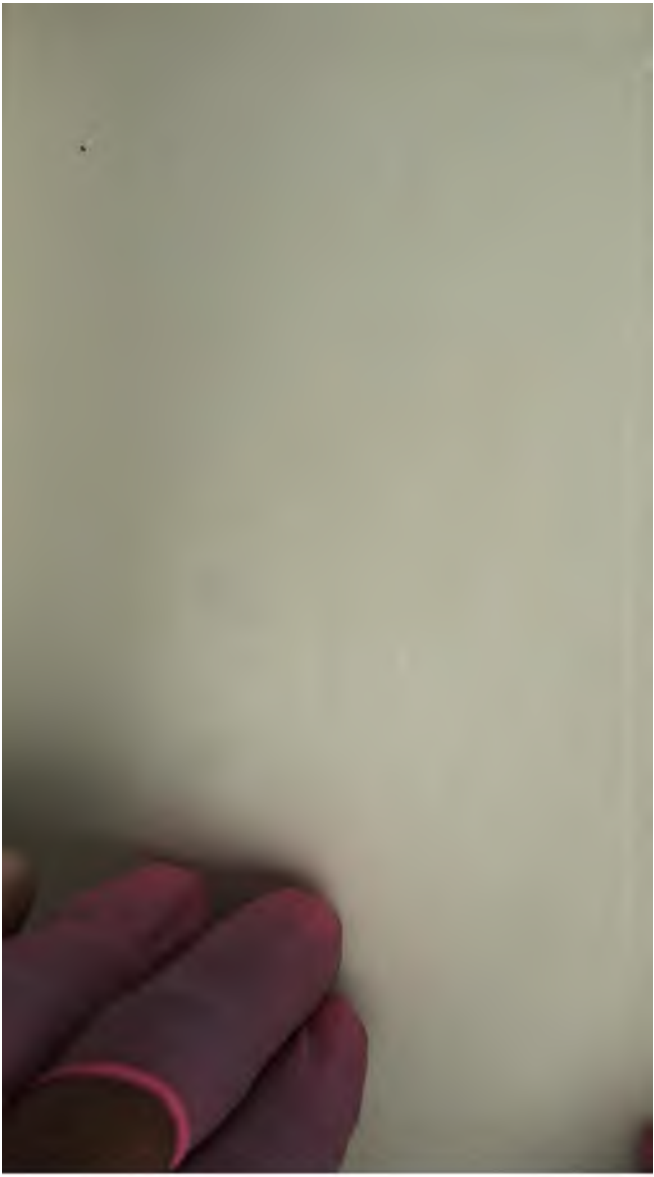

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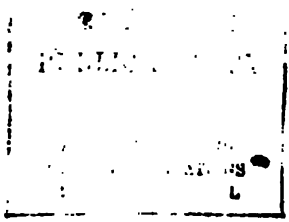

Charles 12th of Sweden.

THE

WORKS

OF

M. DE VOLTAIRE.

Tranſlated from the FRENCH.

WITH

Notes, Hiſtorical and Critical.

By T. SMOLLETT, M. D.
T. FRANCKLIN, M. A. and OTHERS.

VOLUME THE TENTH.

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OBSERVATIONS ON HISTORY.

WILL public authors never ceaſe to give us falſe conceptions of the paſt, the preſent, and the future? In their opinion, ſurely, mankind muſt have been born to be deceived; with ſo much confidence do they pretend, even in this enlightened age, to obtrude upon us the fables of Herodotus; nay, and fables which even Herodotus himſelf would not have dared to impoſe upon the Greeks.

What the wiſer are we for being ſo frequently told that Menes was the grandſon of Noah? and with what appearance of juſtice can we affect to ridicule the genealogies of Moreri, while we ourſelves compoſe others no leſs ridiculous? Noah, (it is affirmed) ſent his children to travel into foreign parts; his grand-ſon, Menes, into Egypt; his other grand ſon into China; I know not what other grand-ſon into Sweden; and a younger deſcendant ſtill into Spain. Travelling, in thoſe days, muſt have improved the minds of young

gentlemen much more than it does at preſent. The moderns, in the courſe of ten or twelve centuries, have hardly been able to acquire an imperfect knowledge in geometry; but theſe ancient travellers were no ſooner arrived in thoſe uncultivated countries, than they began to foretel eclipſes. Certain it is, the authentic hiſtory of China contains computations of eclipſes for about four thouſand years. Confucius mentions thirty-ſix computations of the ſame nature, all of which, except four, the mathematical miſſionaries have found to be juſt. But theſe facts do not puzzle the writers who have been pleaſed to make Noah the grand-father of Fohi; becauſe they are reſolved that nothing ſhall puzzle them.

Other admirers of antiquity would make us believe, that the Egyptians were the wiſeſt people in the univerſe; becauſe, forſooth, they paid an extreme deference to their prieſts; and yet it is well known, that the wiſe prieſts and legiſlators of theſe wiſe people worſhipped monkeys, cats, and onions. We may extol the works of the ancient Egyptians as much as ever we pleaſe: ſuch of them, however, as ſtill remains, are at beſt but ſhapeleſs blocks; the fineſt of their ſtatues not being comparable to the moſt indifferent of our ordinary artiſts. The Egyptians muſt certainly have learned the art of ſculpture from the Greeks; there never having been a maſterly performance produced in Egypt, that did not proceed from the hand of a Greek. The Egyptians, 'tis ſaid, were profoundly ſkilled in aſtronomy: the four ſides of a great pyramid are oppoſed to the four quarters of the world; is not that a convincing proof of the truth of the aſſertion? But were the Egyptians equal to *our* Caſſini's, our Halley's, our Kepler's, or Tycho-Brahe's?

Brahe's; theſe good people told Herodotus, with great gravity, that in eleven thouſand years, the ſun had ſet twice in the ſame place where it riſes. Such was their aſtronomy *!

It coſt, according to Mr. Rollin, fifty thouſand crowns to open and ſhut the ſluices of the lake Mœris. This author is very dear with his ſluices; and, beſides, his calculations are falſe. There is no ſluice, (unleſs it be a very bad one indeed,) that may not be opened and ſhut for a crown: but it coſt, he ſays, fifty talents to open and ſhut theſe ſluices. It muſt be obſerved, that in the time of Colbert, a talent was equal to three thouſand French livres. Rollin, however, is not aware, that ſince that period, the current value of our ſpecie is nearly doubled; and that therefore, the expences of opening the ſluices of the lake Mœris muſt have been, according to his computation, about three hundred thouſand livres, which is almoſt two hundred and ninety-ſeven thouſand livres more than enough. All the other calculations in his thirteen volumes ſeem to be equally inaccurate. The ſame author affirms, after Herodotus, that in Egypt, a country not near ſo extenſive as France, there was a ſtanding army of four hundred thouſand men, every one of whom had a daily allowance of five pounds of bread, and two

* If their knowledge in aſtronomy did not extend farther than the inſtances here given, they ſurely had no great reaſon to boaſt of their knowledge. But if we may believe Diodorus Siculus, and other hiſtorians beſides Herodotus, the Egyptians excelled all the world in the arts of geometry, arithmetic, aſtronomy, and medicine; and it is generally allowed that Egypt was the ſource from whence Greece derived the firſt principles of the arts and ſciences, both for pleaſure and utility.

pounds of fleſh. This laſt article makes eight hundred thouſand pounds of fleſh a-day for the ſoldiers alone, in a country where they hardly eat any fleſh at all. Beſides, to whom belonged theſe four hundred thouſand ſoldiers, while Egypt was divided into ſeveral petty principalities? But this is not all; we are further told, that every ſoldier had ſix acres of land free from taxes. Two millions four hundred thouſand acres of ground that paid nothing to the ſtate! and yet this poor and petty ſtate maintain a greater army than is now-a-days maintained by the grand ſignor, who is maſter of Egypt, and other territories, ten times more extenſive than it. Lewis XIV. it is true, had four hundred thouſand men in arms for ſome years; but that was an extraordinary and unnatural effort, and that effort hath ruined France.

Would people but take the pains to conſult their reaſon, inſtead of their memory, and to examine rather than tranſcribe, we ſhould not ſee books and errors multiplied without end: nothing would then be committed to writing that had not the recommendation at once of novelty and of truth. The qualification in which hiſtorians are commonly defective is a true philoſophical ſpirit; moſt of them, as they now are, inſtead of diſcuſſing matters of fact with men, content themſelves with telling tales to children. Should the fable of Smerdis' ears, or that of Darius*, who gained a king-

* We ſee nothing at all improbable in this ſtory of Darius, who agreed with the other competitors, that next day they ſhould meet at a certain place, and the crown be conferred on him whoſe horſe ſhould firſt neigh. This circumſtance being known to Oebares, an officer of Darius, he

kingdom by the neighing of his horſe, or that of Sanacharib, or Sennakerib, or Sannacabon, whoſe army was miraculouſly deſtroyed by rats; ſhould ſuch fables as theſe, I ſay, be reprinted in the preſent age? If men will ſtill repeat ſuch improbable ſtories, let them at leaſt repreſent them as no better than they really are.

Is it allowable for a man of ſenſe, born in the eighteenth century, to entertain us with a ſerious diſcourſe concerning the oracles of Delphos? one while to tell us that this oracle propheſied that Cræſus would boil a ſheep and a tortoiſe in a tortoiſe-ſhell? at another, to inform us that battles were won agreeable to the prediction of Apollo? and to aſſign as the cauſe of theſe events the great power of the devil? Mr. Rollin, in his ancient hiſtory, undertakes the defence of oracles againſt Van Dale, Fontenelle, and Baſnage. "With regard to Mr. Fontenelle, ſays he, his book againſt oracles, drawn from Van Dale, is to be conſidered merely as a youthful performance." This decree, I am afraid, of Rollin's old age againſt Fontenelle's youth, will be reverſed at the bar of reaſon, where it ſeldom happens that rhetoricians gain their cauſe, when they enter the liſts with philoſophers. To be convinced of this, we need only attend to what Rollin hath ſaid in his tenth

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he cauſed a mare to be brought to his maſter's horſe on the very ſpot aſſigned as the ſcene of determination, and next day the ſteed no ſooner approached the place than he began to neigh. That ſuch an agreement ſhould be made, and ſuch a ſtratagem practiſed among a barbarous people, is not at all unlikely; as an analogous inſtance, we might quote from ſcripture the device of Jacob's peeled ſticks when he fed the flocks of Laban.

volume, where he means to ſpeak of phyſics. He there alledges, that Archimedes, in order to demonſtrate the ſurpriſing effects of the mechanical powers, to his good friend the king of Syracuſe, ordered a galley, doubly loaded, to be placed on the ſolid earth, and then puſhed it gently into the ſtream with one finger, without ſo much as coming out of his chariot. This, 'tis plain, is the language of a rhetorician; had he had the leaſt ſmattering of philoſophy, he would at once have perceived the abſurdity of what he aſſerts *.

Would we improve the preſent time to the beſt advantage, we ought not, methinks, to ſquander away our lives in brooding over ancient fables. I would adviſe a young man to acquire a ſlight knowledge of theſe remote ages; but I would have him to begin the ſerious ſtudy of hiſtory at that period where it becomes truly intereſting to us, which, in my opinion, is towards the end of the fifteenth century. From that æra hiſtory is rendered more authentic, chiefly by means of the art of printing, which was then concealed. The general face of Europe was invented: the Turks, who overſpread it, baniſhed polite literature from Conſtantinople; but it flouriſhed in Italy: it was eſtabliſhed in France; and it went to poliſh the rude manners of the Germans, the Engliſh, and other northern nations. A new religion delivered one half of Europe from papal ſubjection. A new ſyſtem of politicks took place: by the help of the

* That Archimedes carried the mechanical powers to a ſurpriſing pitch of exertion is certainly true; and whether from a complication of theſe powers it might not be poſſible to do ſomething like what is here mentioned, we ſhall *leave philoſophers* to determine.

mariner's

mariner's compaſs, the Cape of Good Hope was doubled, and the trade between Europe and China was rendered more eaſy than that between Paris and Madrid. America was diſcovered; a new world was conquered, and our own was almoſt totally changed: the chriſtian nations of Europe became a kind of immenſe republic, in which the balance of power was eſtabliſhed upon a more ſure and ſolid foundation than it had ever been in ancient Greece. A perpetual intercourſe unites all the parts of this vaſt body together, in ſpite of the wars excited by the ambition of kings, and even in ſpite of religious wars, which are ſtill more deſtructive. The arts, which are the glory of every kingdom, were carried to a degree of perfection which they never attained in Greece and Rome. This is the hiſtory which every man ought to know: in this you will find no chimerical prediction, no lying oracles, no falſe miracles, no ſtupid fables; in this every thing is true, almoſt to the moſt minute circumſtances, about which, however, none but little ſouls will give them great concern. To us every thing relates, every thing contributes to our advantage. The plate from which we eat, our furniture, our wants, our new pleaſures, all conſpire to remind us that America, the Eaſt Indies, and, of conſequence, the whole world has, within theſe two centuries and a half, been reunited by the induſtry of our forefathers. We cannot take a ſingle ſtep that does not recal to our memory the great change which hath lately been brought about in the world. Here are a hundred cities which were formerly ſubject to the pope, but which are now free. There have been eſtabliſhed, at leaſt for a time, the privileges of the Germanic body: here is formed the moſt perfect re-

republic in a country, which is every moment in danger of being ſwallowed up by the ſea: England hath united true liberty with royalty: Sweden copies the glorious example; but her ſiſter Denmark has not the prudence to follow the ſame courſe. If I travel into Germany, France, or Spain, I every where find the traces of that inveterate quarrel, which hath ſubſiſted ſo long between the houſes of Auſtria and Bourbon; houſes united by ſo many treaties, all which have been productive of the moſt cruel and bloody wars. There is not a ſingle man in Europe, whoſe fortune has not, in ſome meaſure, been influenced by thoſe great revolutions. And does it become us after this to trifle away our time with Salmanazar, and Mardokempad, and with curious, but uſeleſs enquiries concerning the anecdotes of Cayamarrat the Perſian, and of Sabaco Metophis. No man ſure, when arrived at the age of maturity, and engaged in the management of weighty and important affairs, will ſit down to relate the tales of his nurſe.

New Reflections on History.

I Doubt not but the ſame change which hath lately happened in phyſics may ſoon take place in the manner of writing hiſtory. New diſcoveries have baniſhed the old ſyſtems. One would with too to ſtudy the characters of mankind with all that intereſting particularity of circumſtance, which now conſtitutes the foundation of natural philoſophy.

We now begin to give little credit to the adventure of Curtius, who ſhut up a gulph, by throw-

throwing himſelf and his horſe into the opening; the ſhields which came down from heaven, and all the pretty taliſmans which the Gods were wont, with ſo much liberality, to preſent to mankind; the Veſtals, who ſet a ſhip afloat by the charm of their girdle: in a word, the whole group of thoſe famous fooleries, with which ancient hiſtories are ſtuffed, are now become the objects of ridicule and deriſion. In the ſame light we conſider what Mr. Rollin has related, with ſo much gravity, in his ancient hiſtory, of king Nabis, who complimented all thoſe who gave him money with the enjoyment of his wife, and placed ſuch as refuſed to contribute in the arms of a handſome doll, reſembling the queen exactly in outward appearance, but armed, under her petticoats, with ſharp iron points. Who, when he hears ſo many authors repeating, one after another, that the famous Otho, archbiſhop of Mayence, was beſieged and devoured by an army of rats, in 698; that Gaſcony was deluged with ſhowers of blood in 1017; and that two armies of ſerpents fought a battle near Tournay, in 1059: who, I ſay, on hearing ſuch improbable ſtories as theſe, can refrain from laughing? prodigies, predictions, and fiery trials, &c. are now held in the ſame degree of credit and eſtimation with the fables of Herodotus.

I here mean to treat of modern hiſtory; in which you will find no dolls embracing courtiers, no biſhops devoured by rats.

Some people take great pains, (and not without reaſon,) to mark the preciſe day on which a battle was fought. They relate every article of a treaty; they deſcribe the pomp and ſolemnity of a coronation, the ceremony of receiving a cap, and even the entry of an ambaſſador, without for-

getting either his Swiſs or lackeys. It is very proper that public records ſhould be kept of every thing, that ſo we may be able to conſult them on occaſion; and indeed I conſider all our large books at preſent as ſo many dictionaries. But after having read the deſcriptions of three or four thouſand battles, and the ſubſtance of ſome hundreds of treaties, I do not find myſelf one jot wiſer than when I began; becauſe from them I learn nothing but events. The battle of Charles Martel gives me no more inſight into the characters of the French and Saracens, than does the victory which Tamerlane gained over Bajazet, into thoſe of the Turks and Tartars. I own indeed, that when I read the memoirs of cardinal de Retz, and of madame de Motteville, I know every word of what the queen-mother ſaid to Mr. de Jerſay; I ſee how the coadjutor aſſiſted in raiſing and ſtrengthening the barrieadoes; and I could almoſt make an abſtract of the long converſations which he had with madame de Bouillon. This ſerves very well to gratify my curioſity; but contributes little to my inſtruction. There are ſome books that contain the true or falſe anecdotes of a court. Whoever hath ſeen courts, or is deſirous of ſeeing them, is as fond of theſe illuſtrious trifles, as a country lady is of hearing the news of the paltry village from which ſhe came.

At bottom both are guided by the ſame principle; and the motive that actuates the one is as noble as that which influences the other. Under the reign of Henry IV. the anecdotes of Charles IX. were the ſubject of converſation; and during the firſt years of Lewis XIV. the duke de Bellegarde was the favourite topic of diſcourſe. All theſe trifles are preſerved for an age or two, and then *ſink into* eternal oblivion.

But the misfortune is, that in order to attain this ſuperficial kind of knowledge, we neglect ſtudies infinitely more uſeful and important. I want to know what was the ſtrength of a nation before a war, and whether that war contributed to increaſe or diminiſh its ſtrength. Was Spain richer before the conqueſt of the new world than it is at preſent? how much more populous was it in the time of Charles V. than in that of Philip IV? Why was it that Amſterdam, about two centuries ago, hardly contained twenty thouſand ſouls? Why, at preſent, does it contain two hundred and forty thouſand? and what is the moſt accurate method of determining the difference? How much more populous is England now than it was under Henry VIII? Is it true (as is alledged in the Perſian Letters,) that the earth wants inhabitants; and that it is depopulated in compariſon of what it was ſome two thouſand years ago? Rome, it is true, contained at that time many more citizens than it does at preſent. I acknowledge too, that Alexandria and Carthage were great cities; but Paris, London, Conſtantinople, Grand Cairo, Amſterdam, and Hamburgh, were not then in being. There were three hundred nations in ancient Gaul; but theſe three hundred nations were not equal to ours, either in number of men, or in the knowledge and practice of the arts of peace. Germany was formerly a foreſt, now it is covered with a hundred opulent cities. One would be almoſt tempted to think that the ſpirit of invective, wearied with perſecuting individuals, had attacked the whole human kind. The conſtant and general complaint is, that the world daily becomes at once more vicious and leſs populous. What then? have we any reaſon to regret our not having

lived in thoſe times, when there was no high-way from Bourdeaux to Orleans, and when Paris was a ſmall village, the inhabitants of which were perpetually cutting each other's throats? People may ſay what they will, but Europe certainly contains more men than it did formerly, and theſe men are more active and induſtrious. One may eaſily know how much Europe hath increaſed in people during the courſe of any number of years; for in almoſt all your great cities, a liſt of the births is publiſhed at the end of the year; and according to the ſure and accurate method lately laid down by a Dutch gentleman, equally ingenious and indefatigable, one may calculate the number of people from that of the births.

This then will be a principal object of attention to every one that would read hiſtory like a citizen and philoſopher. But he will take care not to confine his attention to this particular alone; he will enquire what hath been the prevailing virtue and vice of a nation; why it hath been powerful or weak by ſea; and how and in what degree it has been enriched during the courſe of a century; theſe two laſt articles may be fully aſcertained from the liſt of exportations. He will endeavour to learn how the arts and manufactures have been eſtabliſhed, and will trace them through all their windings and turnings, in their progreſs from one country to another. In a word, the revolutions in the manners of the people, and in the laws of the land, will be the great object of his moſt ſerious ſtudy and attention. Thus, inſtead of obtaining a partial knowledge of the hiſtory of kings and courts, he will acquire a thorough inſight into the characters of mankind.

In

In vain do I read the annals of France; all our histories are silent with regard to these interesting particulars. None of them have chosen for their motto, *Homo sum, humani nil a me alienum puto.* We ought then, in my opinion, artfully to interweave these useful enquiries with the general contexture of events. This appears to me to be the only method of writing modern history like a true politician and a true philosopher. To write ancient history is, in effect, to mix a few truths with a thousand falsehoods. Perhaps the use of this history is much the same with that of ancient fables; the great events which it contains are the constant subjects of our paintings, our poems, our conversation; and from thence too we derive the grand outlines of morality. We should read the adventures of Alexander, as we do the labours of Hercules. In fine, ancient history seems to have the same relation to modern, that old medals have to the current coin; the former are reposited in the cabinets of the curious, the latter circulates through the world for the use and convenience of mankind.

But to undertake and execute such a work, the author must be possessed of several kinds of knowledge besides that of books; he must be encouraged by the government, as much, at least, for what he may perform, as were the Boileau's, the Racine's, and the Valincourt's, for what they never performed; so that what a witty clerk of the treasury said of these gentlemen may never be applicable to him. "We never saw any thing belonging to them but their seal."

ANECDOTES relating to PETER the GREAT, Emperor of RUSSIA.

THE many important and difficult enterprizes undertaken and executed by Peter I. none of which had ever entered into the thoughts of any of his predeceſſors, juſtly procured him the ſirname of Great. Before his time, the knowledge of the Ruſſians was wholly confined to thoſe ſimple arts which are the reſult of mere neceſſity. So powerful is the influence of habit over the generality of mankind, and ſo little deſirous are they of what they don't underſtand; the genius unfolds itſelf with ſo much difficulty, and is ſo eaſily ſuppreſſed by the ſlighteſt obſtacles, that there is great reaſon to believe, that all nations continued, for thouſands of ages, in a ſtate of the moſt profound ignorance, till, at laſt, ſuch men as Peter the Great aroſe, at that preciſe period when it was proper they ſhould ariſe.

A young gentleman of Geneva, called Le Fort, happened to be at Moſcow, with the Daniſh ambaſſador, about the year 1695. He had learned the Ruſſian tongue in a very ſhort time, and ſpoke almoſt all the European languages. Peter the Great, who was then nineteen years of age, ſaw Le Fort, conceived a liking for him, took him at firſt into his ſervice, and afterwards admitted him into the moſt intimate familiarity. From him he learned, that there was another manner of living and of reigning, than that, which, from time immemorial, had been unhappily eſtabliſhed throughout his vaſt empire; and, had it not been for this young gentleman, Ruſſia had ſtill remained in its *original* ſtate of rudeneſs and barbarity.

Peter

Peter muſt have been born with a ſoul truly great, otherwiſe he never would have liſtened ſo readily to the inſtructions of a ſtranger, nor been able to diveſt himſelf of all the prejudices of the prince and of the Ruſſian. He ſoon perceived that he had a nation and an empire to form anew; but he was poſſeſſed of no means equal to the accompliſhment of ſuch an arduous and noble enterprize. From that time he took a reſolution of leaving his dominions, and of going, like Prometheus, to borrow the heavenly fire to animate his compatriots. This celeſtial ſpark he went to ſearch for among the Dutch, who, about three centuries before, were as deſtitute of it as the Ruſſians themſelves. He could not, however, carry his ſcheme into execution ſo ſoon as he could have wiſhed. He was obliged to ſupport a war againſt the Turks, or rather againſt the Tartars, in 1696; and it was not till after he had conquered his enemies, that he left his own dominions, and went to learn all the arts which were utterly unknown in Ruſſia. The maſter of the largeſt empire in the univerſe lived almoſt two years at Amſterdam, and in the village of Sardam, under the name of Peter Michaeloff; though his common appellation was Mr. Peter Bas. He ordered his name to be enrolled among the carpenters of that famous village, which furniſhed ſhips to almoſt all Europe. He handled the adz and the compaſs; and, after having laboured in his ſhop at ſhip-building, he ſtudied geography, geometry, and hiſtory. The mob at firſt crouded about him; but he ſoon checked their curioſity, by repelling his impertinent viſitors with a good deal of rudeneſs and ſeverity, which, however, thoſe people, ſo remarkable for pride and reſentment, bore with great

patience:

patience. The firſt language he learned was the Dutch: he then applied himſelf to the German, which appeared to him a very ſmooth and harmonious tongue, and which he ordered to be ſpoke at his own court.

He acquired likewiſe a ſmattering of the Engliſh, in his voyage to London; but he never underſtood the French, which hath ſince become the language of Peterſburg, under the empreſs Elizabeth, in proportion as the nation has been civilized and poliſhed.

His ſtature was tall; his countenance was noble and majeſtic, but ſometimes diſfigured by convulſions, which even altered the features of his face. This defect in his organs was commonly attributed to the effects of poiſon, which was ſaid to have been given him by his ſiſter Sophia. But the true poiſon was the wine and brandy, in which, truſting too much to the ſtrength of his conſtitution, he frequently indulged to exceſs.

He converſed as frankly with a common mechanic as with the general of an army. In this he acted, not like a barbarian, who makes no diſtinction between men of different ranks, nor like a popular prince, who wants to ingratiate himſelf with all the world; he acted like a man who was deſirous of acquiring knowledge. He loved the women as much as his rival, the king of Sweden, dreaded them; and, as in eating, ſo in matters of gallantry, every thing was equally good. He valued himſelf much more on being able to drink a great quantity, than on poſſeſſing a nice and exquiſite taſte, capable of diſtinguiſhing your fine and delicious wines.

It is a common obſervation, that kings and legiſlators ſhould not allow themſelves to be hur-

ried

ried away by the violence of paſſion; but no man was ever more paſſionate, or leſs merciful, than Peter the Great. This is one of thoſe defects in the character of a king, which it is impoſſible to excuſe by a frank confeſſion; at laſt, however, he became ſenſible of his failing, and, in his ſecond journey to Holland, he ſaid to a magiſtrate of that country, "I have reformed my ſubjects, but have not been able to reform myſelf." It muſt be owned, however, that the cruelties with which he is reproached were as cuſtomary at the court of Moſcow, as at that of Morocco. Nothing was more common, than to ſee a czar inflicting an hundred laſhes with a bull's pizzle upon the naked ſhoulders of one of the firſt officers of the crown, or of a maid of honour, for having neglected their duty thro' drunkenneſs; or trying the goodneſs of his ſabre, by cutting off the head of a criminal. Peter had performed ſome of theſe Ruſſian ceremonies. Le Fort, indeed, had gained ſuch an aſcendant over him, as to be able, ſometimes, to ſtop his hand when he was juſt upon the point of ſtriking; but, unhappily, Le Fort was not always in his company.

His journey to Holland, and eſpecially his taſte for the arts, which now began to unfold itſelf, ſoftened his manners a little; for it is the natural tendency of all the arts to render men more humane and ſociable. He often breakfaſted with a geographer, with whom he made ſea-charts. He paſſed whole days with the famous Ruiſch, who firſt invented the art of making thoſe curious injections, which have carried medicine to ſo high a degree of perfection, and have freed it from its former nauſeouſneſs. Peter gave himſelf, to the age of twenty-two, ſuch an education, as a Dutch mechanic

mechanic would have given a ſon, in whom he perceived ſome ſparks of genius; and this education was much ſuperior to what any emperor of Ruſſia before him had ever received. At the ſame time, he ſent the young Muſcovites to travel and improve themſelves in all the countries of Europe. But his firſt attempts of this nature were attended with little ſucceſs. His new diſciples did not imitate the example of their maſter; there was even one of them that had been ſent to Venice, who never came out of his chamber, that ſo he might have no cauſe to reproach himſelf with having ſeen any other country than Ruſſia. This ſtrong averſion to foreign countries was infuſed into them by their prieſts, who alledged that travelling was an unpardonable crime in a Chriſtian, for the ſame reaſon that the Jews, in the Old Teſtament, had been forbid to aſſume the manners of their neighbours, more rich and more induſtrious than themſelves.

In 1698 he left Amſterdam, and went to England, not in the character of a ſhip-wright, nor in that of a ſovereign, but under the name of a Ruſſian gentleman who travelled for his inſtruction*. He ſaw and examined every thing: he even went to the repreſentation of an Engliſh comedy,

* Peter expreſſed a deſire to ſee the manner in which Britiſh criminals were puniſhed with death; but, it proving what is called a maiden ſeſſion at the Old Baily, he grew impatient and complained to king William, who told him he could not help his being diſappointed, as no perſon had been condemned, and he had no right to take away the life of any ſubject until he ſhould receive the ſentence of the law. "If that be the caſe, (ſaid Peter) you may take any of my retinue, and cauſe them to be executed in the Engliſh manner." But this offer his Britannick majeſty thought proper to decline.

though

though he did not underſtand a word of it; but he found in the play-houſe an actreſs, called Miſs Crofts, from whom he received ſome favours, without having the generoſity to make her fortune.

King William cauſed a convenient houſe to be fitted up for his accommodation, which in London is a very great compliment. Palaces are not common in that immenſe city: there you hardly ſee any thing but low houſes, with paultry gates, like thoſe of our ſhops, without court or garden. Indifferent as the houſe was, the czar found it too handſome; and, that he might have the better opportunity of improving himſelf in ſea-affairs, he took up his lodging in Wapping. He frequently dreſſed himſelf in the habit of a ſailor, and made uſe of this diſguiſe to engage ſeveral ſeamen in his ſervice.

It was at London that he formed the deſign of drawing the Volga and the Tanais into the ſame channel. He even intended to join the Dwina to theſe two rivers by a canal; and thus to re-unite the Ocean and the Black and Caſpian Seas. The Engliſh, whom he carried along with him, ſerved him but poorly in this great project; and the Turks, who took Aſoph from him in 1712, oppoſed the execution of ſuch a vaſt undertaking*.

As he happened to want money at London, the merchants of that city offered him an hundred thouſand crowns, provided he would grant them a liberty of tranſporting tobacco into Ruſſia. This was not only a great novelty in Muſcovy, but was even inconſiſtent with the eſtabliſhed religion. The

* If we may believe Capt. Perry, whom Peter engaged as chief engineer in this great work, the Engliſh were treated with equal ingratitude and brutality.

patriarch

patriarch had excommunicated every one that ſmoked tobacco, becauſe their enemies, the Turks, ſmoked; and the clergy conſidered it as one of the greateſt privileges of their order, to hinder the Ruſſians from ſmoking. The czar, however, accepted the hundred thouſand crowns, and undertook to introduce the practice of ſmoking even among the clergy themſelves. He likewiſe reſolved to make ſeveral other innovations in the religious ſyſtem.

Kings are commonly wont to make preſents to ſuch illuſtrious travellers; and the preſent which William made to Peter was a genteel compliment, worthy of them both; he gave him a yacht of twenty-five guns, an excellent ſailer, gilt like a Roman altar, and ſtored with all kinds of proviſions; and the whole ſhip's crew chearfully conſented that they ſhould be included in the preſent. In this yacht, of which himſelf was the chief pilot, Peter returned to Holland to re-viſit his carpenters. From thence, about the middle of the year 1698, he went to Vienna, where there was no neceſſity for his tarrying ſo long as at London, becauſe, at the court of the grave Leopold, there was much more ceremony to be performed, and far leſs inſtruction to be gained. After having ſeen Vienna, he intended to have gone to Venice, and thence to Rome; but a civil war, occaſioned by his abſence, and by the permiſſion of ſmoking, obliged him immediately to return to Moſcow. The ſtrelits, the ancient troops of the czars, ſomewhat akin to the janiſſaries, as turbulent, as undiſciplined, leſs brave, but not leſs barbarous, were inſtigated to revolt by ſome monks and abbots, half Greeks and half Ruſſians, who perſuaded them that God was highly provoked at the intro-

introduction of tobacco into Muſcovy; and thus threw the whole nation into a flame about this important quarrel. Peter, who was fully apprized of the great power of the monks and ſtrelits, had taken his meaſures accordingly. He had a numerous body of forces, compoſed almoſt entirely of foreigners, well diſciplined, well paid, and well armed, and who ſmoked under the command of general Gordon, a man thoroughly verſed in the art of war, and no friend to the monks. This was the very point in which the ſultan Oſman had failed, when endeavouring, like Peter, to reform his janiſſaries, and having no power to oppoſe to their refractory ſpirit, he was ſo far from being able to reform them, that he loſt his life in the attempt.

Peter's armies were now put upon the ſame footing with thoſe of the other European princes. He employed his Engliſh and Dutch carpenters in building ſhips at Veronitz, upon the Tanais, four hundred leagues from Moſcow. He embelliſhed the towns, provided for their ſafety, made highways five hundred leagues in length, eſtabliſhed manufactures of every kind; and, what clearly ſhews the profound ignorance in which the Ruſſians had formerly lived, their firſt manufacture was that of pins. They now make flowered velvets and gold and ſilver ſtuffs at Moſcow. Such mighty things may be performed by one man, when he is an abſolute ſovereign, and knows how to exert his authority!

The war he waged againſt Charles XII. in order to recover the provinces which the Swedes had formerly taken from the Ruſſians, notwithſtanding the bad ſucceſs with which it was at firſt attended, did not hinder him from continuing his reforma-

tions,

tions, both in church and ſtate; and accordingly, at the end of 1699, he ordered that the enſuing year ſhould commence in the month of January, and not in the month of September. The Ruſſians, who thought that God had created the world in September, were ſurpriſed to hear that their czar had power to alter what God had eſtabliſhed. This alteration began with the eighteenth century, and was uſhered in by a grand jubilee, which the czar appointed by his own authority; for having ſuppreſſed the dignity of the patriarch, he exerciſed all the functions of that office himſelf. It is not true, as is commonly reported, that he put the patriarch into the mad-houſe of Moſcow. Whenever he had a mind, at once to divert himſelf and inflict puniſhment, he was wont to ſay to the delinquent, "I make you a fool;" and the perſon to whom he gave this pretty appellation, were he even the firſt nobleman of the kingdom, was forced to carry a bauble, jacket, and bells, and to divert the court in quality of his czariſh majeſty's fool. This taſk, however, he did not impoſe upon the patriarch; he contented himſelf with ſimply ſuppreſſing an employment, which thoſe, who had enjoyed it, had abuſed to ſuch a degree, that they obliged the emperors to walk before them once a year, holding the bridle of the patriarchal horſe; a ceremony which Peter the Great immediately aboliſhed.

In order to have more ſubjects, he reſolved to have fewer monks; and accordingly ordained, that, for the future, no perſon under fifty years of age ſhould be allowed to take the habit of that order; the conſequence of which was, that in his time, of all the countries that contained monks, Ruſſia contained the feweſt; but after his death,

this weed, which he had ſo happily extirpated, regerminated afreſh, owing partly to that natural foible of all monks, the deſire of enlarging their numbers, and partly to the fooliſh indulgence of ſome governments, in tolerating ſuch a pernicious practice.

He likewiſe made ſome prudent regulations relating to the clergy, and tending to the reformation of their lives, although his own, in all conſcience, was licentious enough; but he wiſely judged, that many things are allowable in a ſovereign, that would be extremely indecent in a curate. Before his time, the women lived perpetually ſecluded from the men. In Ruſſia it was a thing unheard of, that a huſband ſhould ever ſee the lady he was to marry. The firſt acquaintance he contracted with her was at church; and one of the nuptial preſents was a large handful of twigs, which the bridegroom ſent to the bride, as a kind of warning, that, on the firſt tranſgreſſion, ſhe had reaſon to expect a little matrimonial correction. Huſbands had even a power of killing their wives with impunity; but ſuch wives as uſurped the ſame right over their huſbands, were buried alive.

Peter aboliſhed the bundles of twigs; prohibited the huſbands from killing their wives; and, in order to match the two ſexes with greater prudence and equality, and by that means to render the married ſtate more happy, he introduced the cuſtom of making the men and women eat together, and of preſenting the ſuitors to their miſtreſſes before the celebration of the marriage. In a word, he proſecuted his ſalutary ſchemes with ſuch vigour and reſolution, that he at laſt eſtabliſhed the ſocial ſtate throughout all his dominions.

Every

Every one knows the regulation he made for obliging his noblemen and their ladies to hold aſſemblies, where all tranſgreſſions againſt the Ruſſian politeneſs were puniſhed by obliging the delinquent to drink a large glaſs of brandy, ſo that the honourable company frequently went home much intoxicated, and little corrected. But it was a work of no ſmall merit to introduce even a kind of imperfect ſociety among a people, who had hitherto lived in a ſtate of the groſſeſt barbarity. He even ventured to exhibit ſome dramatic performances. The princeſs Natalia, one of his ſiſters, wrote ſome tragedies in the Ruſſian tongue, not unlike to thoſe of Shakeſpear, in which tyrants and harlequins form the principal characters. The band of muſic was compoſed of Ruſſian fiddles, upon which they played with bulls pizzles. They have now French comedies and Italian operas at Peterſburg; in every thing, grandeur and taſte hath ſucceeded to barbarity. One of the moſt difficult attempts of this great founder of the Ruſſian empire was to ſhorten the coats of his ſubjects, and to make them ſhave their beards. This was the ſubject of great murmuring, and of many complaints. How was it poſſible to teach a whole nation to make their cloaths after the German faſhion, and to handle the razor? arduous, however, as was the undertaking, it was at laſt accompliſhed, by placing at the gates of every town a ſufficient number of taylors and barbers; the former clipped the coats, and the latter ſhaved the beards, of all thoſe who entered; and ſuch as refuſed to ſubmit to theſe regulations, were obliged to pay a fine equal to forty pence of our coin. But, in a ſhort time, the people chuſed much rather to part with their beards than their money.

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The women, who greatly preferred a ſmooth to a rough chin, aſſiſted the czar in this reformation: to him they were obliged for being exempted from the diſcipline of the whip, for being indulged with the company of the men, and for having ſmoother and more decent faces to kiſs.

While Peter amuſed himſelf in making theſe reformations, and while he was engaged in a bloody war againſt Charles XII. he laid, in 1704, the foundations of the large city and harbour of Peterſburg, in a moraſs, where there was not before ſo much as a ſingle cottage. He laboured with his own hands in building the firſt houſe: no difficulties were ſufficient to abate his ardour: workmen were compelled to come from the frontiers of Aſtracan, and from the coaſts of the Black and Caſpian Seas, to the coaſt of the Baltick. Upwards of an hundred thouſand men periſhed in the undertaking, partly by the ſevere labour they were obliged to undergo, and partly by the want and hardſhips to which they were expoſed; but, notwithſtanding theſe obſtructions, the city was at laſt raiſed. The harbours of Archangel, of Aſtracan, and of Veronick, were likewiſe built.

To defray the expences of executing ſo many mighty projects, of ſupporting fleets in the Baltick Sea, and of maintaining an hundred thouſand regular troops, the public revenue, at that time, was only about twenty millions of livres. I have ſeen an exact account of it, in the poſſeſſion of a gentleman who had been an ambaſſador at Peterſburg. But the wages of the workmen were proportioned to the wealth of the kingdom. It ought to be remembered, that the conſtruction of the pyramids coſt the kings of Egypt nothing but

onions. I repeat it again; we have only to exert our utmoſt endeavours; we can never exert them enough.

After having, as it were, created his nation, Peter thought he might take the liberty of gratifying his own humour, by eſpouſing his miſtreſs, a miſtreſs who well deſerved to be his wife; and accordingly the marriage was ſolemnized in public, in the year 1712. This lady was the famous Catharine, originally an orphan, born in the village of Ringen, in Eſtonia, brought up by a vicar out of mere charity, married to a Livonian ſoldier, and taken priſoner by a party of the enemy two days after her marriage. She was firſt a ſervant in the family of general Bauer, and afterwards in that of Menzikoff, who, from a paſtry-cook's boy, became a prince of the empire, and the firſt ſubject in the nation. At laſt ſhe was married to Peter the Great; and, after his death, became empreſs of Ruſſia, a dignity to which her great virtues and abilities gave her a juſt claim. She ſoftened the ferocity of her huſband's manners to a very conſiderable degree; and ſaved many more backs from the knout, and many more heads from the ax, than ever general Le Fort had been able to do. The people loved her, they revered her. A German baron, a maſter of horſe to an abbé de Fulde, would have diſdained to have married Catharine; but Peter thought, that with him merit did not need to be ſet off by a genealogy of thirty-two deſcents. Princes are apt to believe, that there is no grandeur but what they confer; and that with them all men are equal. Certain it is, birth makes no more difference between one man and another than between an aſs whoſe ſire carried dung, and an aſs whoſe father carried

carried reflicks. Education makes a great difference, talents make a greater, and fortune the greateſt of all. Catharine had received, from her curate of Eſtonia, an education as good, at leaſt, as any lady of Moſcow, or of Archangel; and ſhe was born with greater abilities, and with a more exalted ſoul. She had managed the family of general Bauer, and that of prince Menzikoff, without being able either to read or write. Whoever is capable to rule a large family is likewiſe capable to rule a kingdom. This perhaps may ſeem to be a paradox; but undoubtedly it requires the ſame oeconomy, the ſame wiſdom and reſolution, to command a hundred perſons, as to command ſeveral thouſand.

The czarowitz Alexis, ſon to the czar, who, like him, had married a ſlave, and, like him, had privately quitted Muſcovy, had not the ſame ſucceſs in his two undertakings. He even loſt his life in an ill-judged attempt to copy the example of his father. This was one of the moſt ſhocking acts of ſeverity that ever ſovereign exerciſed: but what reflects great honour upon the memory of the empreſs Catharine, ſhe had no hand in the untimely fate of this prince, who was ſprung from another bed, and who hated every thing that his father loved; Catharine was never accuſed of having acted the cruel ſtep-mother. The great crime of the unhappy Alexis was, that he was too much a Ruſſian, and that he diſapproved of all the noble and illuſtrious things which his father had done for the glory and emolument of the nation. One day, as he heard ſome Muſcovites complain of the hard labour they were obliged to endure in building Peterſburg, "Take comfort, ſaid he, this city ſhall not ſtand long." When he ought

to have been attending his father, in thoſe journeys of five or ſix hundred leagues which the czar frequently underſook, he pretended to be ſick: the phyſicians purged him ſeverely for a diſeaſe with which he was not troubled; and ſo many medicines, joined to great quantities of brandy, at once impaired his health and altered his temper. He diſcovered at firſt an inclination to learning; he underſtood geometry and hiſtory, and had learned the German language; but he neither loved war, nor would he ſtudy the art of it; and this was the fault with which his father chiefly reproached him. He had been married in 1711, to the princeſs of Wolfenbuttle, ſiſter to the empreſs, the wife of Charles IV. This marriage proved very unhappy; the company of the princeſs was often abandoned for a debauch of brandy, and for the careſſes of one Afroſina, a Finland girl, tall, handſome, and agreeable. Some people pretend that the princeſs died of grief, if, indeed, grief can ever be the occaſion of death; and that afterwards the czarowitz named Afroſina privately, in 1716, juſt at the time when the empreſs Catharine brought him a brother; a preſent with which he could willingly have diſpenſed

The diſguſt between the father and ſon became every day more inveterate, till at laſt, in 1716, Peter threatened to diſinherit the prince, and the latter declared his intention of taking the monkiſh habit.

In 1717, the czar reſumed his travels, as well from political views, as from the motive of curioſity; and accordingly he now repaired to France. Had his ſon been inclined to revolt, had he in reality ſecured a party in his intereſt, this was the time to carry his ſcheme into execution; but, inſtead

inſtead of continuing in Ruſſia and gaining partiſans, he went to travel like his father; after having, with great difficulty, collected a few thouſand ducats, which he privately borrowed. He now threw himſelf into the arms of the emperor Charles VI. the brother-in-law of his deceaſed wife. For ſome time he lived *incognito* at Vienna; from thence he went to Naples, where he remained almoſt a year, without either the czar, or any one in Ruſſia, knowing where he was.

While the ſon lay thus concealed, the father was at Paris, where he was treated with all the reſpect and deference which he had met with in other countries, and with a politeneſs which he could find no where but in France. If he went to ſee a manufacture, and was charmed with any particular piece of work, he was ſure, next day, to receive it in a preſent. He went to dine with the duke d'Antin, at Petitbourg, where the firſt thing preſented to his view was his own picture at full length, with the ſame dreſs which he wore. When he went to ſee the royal collection of medals, the minters ſtruck ſeveral medals of every kind before him, and preſented them to him with great politeneſs; at laſt they ſtruck one, which they purpoſely let fall at his feet, and left him to pick it up; on this he ſaw himſelf engraved in a very elegant manner, with theſe words, PETER THE GREAT. The reverſe was a Fame, with this inſcription, *Vires acquirit eundo*; an allegory equally juſt and flattering to a prince, who really encreaſed his knowledge by his travels.

Upon ſeeing the tomb of cardinal de Richelieu, and the ſtatue of that great miniſter, worthy of the perſonage whom it repreſents, Peter diſcovered one of thoſe violent tranſports, and ex-

preſſed one of thoſe noble ſentiments, which none but great ſouls are capable of feeling. He mounted the tomb, and embracing the ſtatue, "Great ſtateſman, ſaid he, why was you not born in my time; I would have given you one half of my empire, to teach me to govern the other." A gentleman, poſſeſſed of leſs enthuſiaſm than the czar, upon hearing the explanation of theſe words, which were originally pronounced in the Ruſſian language, obſerved, "That if he had given him one half of it, he would not have been long able to preſerve the other."

The czar, after having traverſed France, where every thing diſpoſes the mind to gentleneſs and clemency, returned to his own country, and there reſumed all his former ſeverity. Having prevailed upon his ſon to leave Naples and repair to Peterſburg, the young prince was conducted from thence to Moſcow, and brought into the preſence of his father, who immediately deprived him of his right of ſucceſſion, and made him ſign a ſolemn deed of renunciation, about the latter end of January 1718, in conſideration of which he promiſed to grant him his life.

It was not however improbable, that ſuch an act might one day be reverſed; in order, therefore, to ſtrengthen it the more, Peter forgetting his paternal character, and conſidering himſelf only as the founder of an empire, which his ſon perhaps might replunge into barbarity, he cauſed a proceſs to be openly commenced againſt this unhappy prince, touching ſome reſervations he was ſuppoſed to have made in the act of renunciation, which had been extorted from him.

An aſſembly of biſhops, abbots, and profeſſors, was convoked; theſe reverend judges found, that, in

in the Old Teſtament, thoſe who curſed their father and mother were worthy of death: that, indeed, David had pardoned his ſon Abſalom, who had revolted againſt him; but that God had never pardoned him. Such was their opinion, without coming to any concluſion; and yet, it was the ſame in fact as if they had ſigned a warrant for his execution. Alexis had never curſed his father; he had never revolted like Abſalom; he had never lain publicly with the king's concubines; he had travelled indeed without the king's permiſſion, and he had writ ſome letters to his friends, in which he had only expreſſed his hopes that they would, one day, remember him in Ruſſia. But, notwithſtanding thoſe favourable circumſtances, of the hundred and twenty-four ſecular judges who ſat on his trial, there was not one that did not vote for his death; and ſuch of them as could not write cauſed their names to be ſigned by others. A report has been ſpread abroad in Europe, and it has been often committed to writing, that the czar cauſed to be tranſlated, from the Spaniſh into the Ruſſian language, the criminal proceſs againſt Don Carlos, that unfortunate prince and heir of a great kingdom, whom his father Philip II. threw into priſon, where he miſerably ended his days: but the truth is, there never was any proceſs commenced againſt Don Carlos; nor was the manner of his death, whether natural or violent, ever fully known. Beſides, Peter, of all princes the moſt deſpotic, needed not any precedents. What is certain is, that the ſon died in his bed the day after the trial, and Peter had then at Moſcow one of the beſt furniſhed apothecaries ſhops in Europe. It is probable, however,

that the death of prince Alexis, the heir of the moſt extenſive empire in the univerſe, and unanimouſly condemned by thoſe who were now his father's ſubjects, and who, had he lived, would have one day become his, might be owing to the terrible ſhock which a ſentence ſo fatal and unprecedented muſt have given to his conſtitution. The father went to ſee his ſon when juſt upon the point of expiring, and is ſaid to have ſhed ſome tears. *Infelix, utcumque ferent ea fata nepotes.* But notwithſtanding his tears, the wheels were covered with the broken limbs of his ſon's friends. He even beheaded his own brother-in-law, the count Lapuchin, brother to his wife Ottokeſa Lapuchin, whom he had divorced, and uncle to prince Alexis, whoſe confeſſor likewiſe loſt his head. If the Ruſſians have been civilized, it muſt be confeſſed they have paid dearly for their politeneſs.

The remaining part of the czar's life was ſpent in the proſecution of thoſe great deſigns, and of thoſe noble ſchemes and projects, which ſeemed to efface the memory of his cruelties, which, after all, perhaps, were abſolutely neceſſary. He frequently made ſpeeches to his court and council; in one of theſe he told them, that he had ſacrificed his ſon to the ſafety and welfare of his dominions.

After the glorious peace which he at laſt concluded with Sweden, in 1721, by which he obtained the whole of Livonia, Eſtonia, and Ingermania, and the half of Carelia and Vibourg, the ſtates of Ruſſia beſtowed upon him the name of Great, of Father of his Country, and of Emperor. The ſtates were repreſented by the ſenate, who ſolemnly conferred theſe titles upon him in preſence of the count de Kinſki, miniſter of the em-

emperor; of Mr. de Campredon, envoy of France, and the ambaſſadors of Pruſſia and Holland. The European princes have been gradually accuſtomed to give this title of emperor to the Ruſſian ſovereign; but this dignity does not hinder the French ambaſſador from taking the right-hand of thoſe of Ruſſia upon all occaſions.

The Ruſſians ought undoubtedly to regard Peter as the greateſt of men. From the coaſts of the Baltick Sea to the frontiers of China, he is a hero: but ought he to be conſidered in the ſame light among us? Is he comparable to our Condés, or our Villars, in valour, or to an infinite number of our cotemporaries, in knowledge, in genius, and in morals? No: but he was a king, and a king badly educated; and he performed what, perhaps, a thouſand ſovereigns in his ſituation would never have accompliſhed. He was poſſeſſed of that ſtrength of mind, which raiſes a man above all kinds of prejudice, as well with regard to the paſt as the preſent. He was an architect who built with brick, and who, in any other country, would have built with marble. Had he reigned in France, he would have carried the arts, from the condition in which they now are, to the higheſt degree of perfection. His having five and twenty large ſhips on the Baltick Sea was an object of admiration: in our ports he would have had two hundred.

From a view of what he has done at Petersburg, one may eaſily judge what he would have done at Paris. What ſurpriſes me the moſt, is, the little reaſon there was to hope that ſuch a man as Peter the Great ſhould ever have ariſen at Moſcow. It was as all the men who have ever inhabited Ruſſia is

to one, that a genius, ſo different from the general character of their nation, would never be beſtowed upon any Ruſſian; and it was ſtill farther, as ſixteen million, the number of the Ruſſians at preſent, is to one, that this genius would not fall to the lot of the czar in particular. But, notwithſtanding theſe improbabilities, the thing has actually happened. A prodigious number of favourable circumſtances muſt have concurred; an infinite ſeries of ages muſt have elapſed before nature produced the man who invented the plough, or him to whom we are indebted for the art of weaving. The Ruſſians now-a-days are not ſurpriſed at their rapid progreſs; in leſs than fifty years they have become ſo familiarly acquainted with all the arts, that one would imagine they had been in poſſeſſion of them for a much greater length of time. There are ſtill vaſt tracts of land in Africa that require the reforming hand of a Peter the Great: ſuch a one may happen to come in ſome millions of years; for every thing is too late in coming.

PIECES

PIECES relating to the HISTORY of CHARLES XII. King of SWEDEN.

LETTER to Mareſchal SCHULLEMBURG, General of the VENETIANS *.

SIR,

I Received, by a courier of the French ambaſſador, the journal of your campaign in 1703 and 1704, with which your excellency has been pleaſed to honour me. Allow me, Sir, to apply to you what an ancient writer ſaid of Cæſar; *Eodem animo ſcripſit quo bellavit.* You muſt expect, Sir, that ſo great a favour will make me extremely ſelfiſh, and will expoſe you to freſh requeſts. I beg you would communicate to me whatever can give me any light into the particulars of the war of Charles XII. I have the honour to ſend you a journal of that king's campaigns; a king worthy of having fought with you. This journal reaches to the battle of Pultowa incluſive. It is the work of a Swediſh officer, called Mr. Alderfeld, who appears to be extremely well informed, and as accurate as it is poſſible to be on a ſubject of this nature. It is not a hiſtory; far from it; but it contains excellent materials for the compoſition of a hiſtory; and I flatter myſelf I ſhall be able to correct mine in many particulars by the memoirs of this officer.

* Dated at the Hague, Sept. 15, 1740.

Beſides, Sir, I muſt own to you, it was with particular pleaſure I found in theſe memoirs a variety of circumſtances that tally exactly with the informations from which I compiled my hiſtory. I, who doubt of every thing, and eſpecially of anecdotes, began to condemn myſelf touching a number of facts which I had advanced. For inſtance, I could no longer believe that Mr. de Guiſcard, the French ambaſſador, was on board the ſhip of Charles XII. in the expedition to Copenhagen. I began to repent of having ſaid, that the cardinal primate, who had ſo great a hand in dethroning king Auguſtus, ſecretly oppoſed the election of king Staniſlaus. I was almoſt aſhamed of having affirmed that the duke of Marlborough, when he went to have a conference with Charles XII. addreſſed himſelf to baron de Gorts before he ſaw count Piper. Mr. de la Motraye had cenſured me for all theſe facts, with a confidence which, I imagined, could proceed from nothing but better information; notwithſtanding which, they are all confirmed by the memoirs of Mr. Alderfeld.

In theſe memoirs I find that the king of Sweden, agreeable to what I had ſaid, ſometimes eat with king Auguſtus, whom he had dethroned, and that he always gave him the right hand. In them I find, that the kings Auguſtus and Staniſlaus met at the court of the latter, and ſaluted each other without exchanging a word: there, likewiſe, mention is made of the extraordinary viſit which Charles paid to Auguſtus at Dreſden, upon leaving his dominions. There, even, the witticiſm of baron Stralheim is quoted word for word, in the ſame manner as I have related it.

In the preface to Mr. Alderfeld's book, the editor talks in the following ſtrain:

"With regard to Mr. de la Motraye, who hath officiouſly taken upon him to criticize Mr. de Voltaire, the peruſal of theſe memoirs will only ſerve to confound him, and make him ſenſible of his own errors, which are much more numerous than thoſe he imputes to his adverſary."

True it is, Sir, and I plainly perceive it by this journal, I have been miſtaken with regard to the minute circumſtances of ſeveral military tranſactions. I have, indeed, aſcertained the exact number of the Swediſh and Muſcovite troops at the famous battle of Narva; but on many other occaſions I have fallen into miſtakes. Time, you know, is the parent of truth; which, after all, I am afraid we have but little reaſon to hope that ever we ſhall be able fully to diſcover. You will ſee, Sir, that Mr. Alderfeld does not agree with you concerning ſome points relating to your admirable paſſage over the Oder; but I will believe the German general, who muſt neceſſarily have known all the particulars of this paſſage, much rather than the Swediſh officer, who could not poſſibly know any more than a few of them.

By the memoirs of your excellency, and by thoſe of this officer, I intend to correct my hiſtory. I likewiſe expect an extract of a hiſtory of Charles XII. written in Swediſh by Mr. Norberg, chaplain to that monarch.

Indeed, I am much afraid that the chaplain has ſometimes viewed matters with other eyes than the miniſters, who have furniſhed me with materials. I ſhall eſteem him, to be ſure, for his zeal in defending the honour of his maſter: but I, who never was chaplain to the king, nor to the

czar; I, whoſe ſole ambition is to ſpeak the truth, will always acknowledge, that the inflexible obſtinacy of Charles XII. at Bender, his reſolution of lying ſix months in bed, and many of his meaſures after the unhappy battle of Pultowa, appear to me more extraordinary than heroic.

If there is any poſſibility of rendering hiſtory uſeful, it is only, in my opinion, by pointing out the good and ill which kings have done to mankind. I think, for inſtance, that if Charles XII. after having ſubdued Denmark, beat the Ruſſians, depoſed his enemy Auguſtus, and eſtabliſhed the new king on the throne of Poland, had granted peace to the czar, who begged it of him; had he returned home the conqueror and peace-maker of the North, and employed his attention in encouraging the arts and commerce in his country, he would then indeed have been truly a great man, inſtead of being but a great warrior, vanquiſhed at laſt by a prince whom he deſpiſed. It were to be wiſhed, for the happineſs of the world, that Peter the Great had been ſometimes leſs cruel, and Charles XII. leſs wedded to his own opinion.

I greatly prefer to both theſe ſovereigns, a prince who regards humanity as the chief virtue, who never has recourſe to war but through abſolute neceſſity, who loves peace becauſe he loves mankind, who encourages all the arts, and who, in one word, though a king, endeavours to act like a philoſopher. Such, Sir, is my hero; nor think that it is only a creature of the imagination. This hero actually exiſts in the perſon of a young king, whoſe fame will ſoon reach even to your parts; you will then ſee whether or not I am deceived: *he deſerves* ſuch generals as you. To write the

hiſtory of ſuch kings is a pleaſing taſk; for then we write the hiſtory of human happineſs.

But if you carefully examine this journal of Mr. Alderfeld, you will find in it little elſe, but that, on Monday the third of April, there were ſo many thouſand men butchered in ſuch a field: that, on Tueſday, whole villages were reduced to aſhes, and the women, claſping their little babes in their arms, were conſumed with them in the ſame flames: that, on Thurſday, a thouſand bombs levelled the houſes of a free and innocent city with the ground, for not having paid immediately a hundred thouſand crowns to a foreign conqueror who happened to paſs by its walls: and that, on Friday, fifteen or ſixteen hundred priſoners periſhed with cold and hunger. Theſe, or ſuch as theſe, are the materials which compoſe the ſubject of his four volumes.

Have you not frequently thought, M. Mareſchal, that your illuſtrious trade is more ſhocking than neceſſary? I ſee Mr. Alderfeld ſometimes diſguiſes cruelties, which ought, in effect, to be forgotten, in order to prevent their ever becoming the object of imitation. For example, I have been credibly informed, that, at the battle of Frauenſtad, marſhal Renſchild cauſed twelve or fifteen hundred Muſcovites to be put to death in cold blood, ſix hours after the action, tho' they begged their lives on their knees. He alledges there were only ſix hundred, and that they were put to death immediately after the battle. This is a circumſtance, Sir, of which you cannot be ignorant: you made the admirable diſpoſition of the Swediſh troops even in this unhappy engagement; be ſo good, then, as to tell me the truth,

for

for which I have as great a regard as I have for your glory.

I expect, with extreme impatience, the other inſtructions with which you ſhall be pleaſed to honour me. Allow me to aſk your opinion of the march of Charles XII. into the Ukraine, of his retreat into Turky, and of the death of Patkul: you can eaſily dictate many things to a ſecretary, which will ſerve to throw light upon ſeveral truths; a favour for which the public will acknowledge themſelves greatly obliged to you. You are bound in duty, Sir, to communicate knowledge to mankind, in return for the admiration which they ſo juſtly entertain of your merit. I am, with the greateſt reſpect and eſteem, and with the moſt ſincere wiſhes for the preſervation of a life, of which you have frequently been ſo prodigal,

Sir, your Excellency's moſt humble
and moſt obedient Servant, V.

P. S. Juſt as I had finiſhed my letter, I was informed, that a French tranſlation of the hiſtory of Charles XII. written in Swediſh by Mr. Norberg, has been printed at the Hague. This will be a new pallet *, in which I ſhall dip the pencils with which I muſt retouch my picture.

* This pallet could not anſwer the purpoſe. It is well known that the hiſtory of Charles XII. by Mr. Norberg, is no more, to the year 1709, than a confuſed collection of facts ill related; and from 1709, than a copy of the hiſtory compoſed by Mr. de Voltaire.

LETTER to Mr. NORBERG, Chaplain to CHARLES XII. king of SWEDEN, and Author of a hiſtory of that Monarch.

PERMIT me, Sir, after having taken the trouble to read that part of your hiſtory of Charles XII. which is already publiſhed, to addreſs to you ſome juſt complaints, both with regard to your manner of treating that hiſtory, and the freedom which, in your preface, you preſume to uſe with thoſe who have treated it before you.

I love the truth; but the old proverb, "All "truths ought not to be told," relates chiefly to inſignificant truths. Be pleaſed to recollect that paſſage in the preface to the hiſtory of Mr. de Voltaire. "The hiſtory of a prince, ſays he, is "not all that he ever did, but only what he did "worthy of being tranſmitted to poſterity."

There are ſome readers, perhaps, who will be glad to ſee the catechiſm which Charles XII. was taught, and will take great pleaſure * in being informed, that in 1693, doctor Peter Rudbekius conferred the degree of doctor upon the maſters of arts Aquinus, Samuel Virenius, Ennegius, Herlandus, Stukius, and upon other perſonages, extremely reſpectable, no doubt, but who had very little concern in the battles, the triumphs, and defeats of your hero.

Perhaps it is a matter of great importance to Europe, to know that the chapel of the caſtle of Stockholm, which was burnt about fifty years

* Hiſtory of Charles XII. by Norberg, page 9. Huſſon's edition.

ago,

ago, ſtood in the new aile, on the north ſide; and that there were in it two pictures of the intendant Kloker, which are now in the church of St. Nicholas; that the ſeats were covered with blue on days of public ſervice; that ſome of them were of oak, and others of walnut-tree*; and that, inſtead of large luſtres, there were ſmall flat candleſticks, which did not fail to produce a very happy effect; that there were there to be ſeen four figures of plaiſter of Paris, and that the pavement was black and white.

We will further believe*, that it is a thing of great conſequence to be well informed, that there was no baſe gold in the canopy which ſerved at the coronation of Charles XII. to know what were the dimenſions of it; whether the church was hung with red or blue cloth; and what was the height of the benches. All this may have its weight with thoſe who want to acquire a thorough knowledge of every the moſt minute concern of princes.

After the tedious detail of theſe mighty matters, you tell us at what hour Charles XII. was crowned; but you do not tell us why he was crowned before the age preſcribed by law; why the queen-mother was deprived of the regency; how the famous Piper gained the confidence of the king; what was the ſtrength of Sweden at that time, what the number of its people, who were its allies, and what its government, its wants, and reſources.

You have given us a part of the military journal of Mr. Alderfeld; but a journal, Sir, is no more a hiſtory than materials are a houſe. Allow me to tell

* Page 11. † Page 31, 32.

you,

you, a hiſtory does not conſiſt in particulariz-ing petty facts, in producing manifeſtos, replies, and rejoinders. This is not the manner in which Quintus Curtius compoſed the hiſtory of Alexander, or in which Livy and Tacitus wrote the Roman hiſtory. There are a thouſand journaliſts; but hardly have we two or three modern hiſtorians. We could wiſh that thoſe who prepare the colours would give them to ſome painter in order to form a picture.

You cannot be ignorant, Sir, that Mr. de Voltaire had publiſhed this declaration which your tranſlator repeats.

"* I love the truth and have no other aim nor intereſt than to know it. Thoſe paſſages in my hiſtory of Charles XII. in which I ſhall find myſelf to have been miſtaken, ſhall be altered. It is natural to think that Mr. Norberg, a Swede, and an eye-witneſs, ſhould be better informed than me, who am a ſtranger. I ſhall correct my hiſtory by his memoirs, and will do it with pleaſure."

You ſee, Sir, with what politeneſs Mr. de Voltaire mentioned your name, and with what deference he expected your performance, though he had received memoirs for the compilation of his own from the hands of ſeveral ambaſſadors, with whom it would appear you had little connection, and even from the hands of more than one ſovereign.

To this French politeneſs, Sir, you reply in a manner that ſavours ſomething of a Gothic taſte.

* Huſſon's edition, 4to. page 13.

You

You ſay, in your preface*, that the hiſtory publiſhed by Mr. de Voltaire is not worth the pains of tranſlating; though, in fact, it hath been tranſlated into almoſt all the European languages, and hath undergone eight editions at London, in an Engliſh dreſs. You there add very politely, that a Puffendorf would have treated him as he did Varillas, as an arch liar.

In order to prove this charitable ſuppoſition, you take care to mark on the margin of your book all the capital errors into which he has fallen.

You particularly obſerve, that major-general Stuart did not receive a ſlight wound in the ſhoulder, as the French author, after a German writer, raſhly affirms, but only a pretty ſevere contuſion. You cannot deny that Mr. de Voltaire has faithfully related the battle of Narva, which in his book at leaſt forms an intereſting deſcription. You muſt certainly know, that he is the only writer who has dared to affirm that Charles XII. fought the battle of Narva with no more than eight thouſand men. All the other hiſtorians give him twenty thouſand: they ſay what is probable; but Mr. de Voltaire is the firſt that has told the truth in this important article. Nevertheleſs, you call him an arch liar, becauſe he ſaid that a ſuit of red laced cloaths was brought to general Liewen, at the ſiege of Thorn; and you magnify this enormous error, by poſitively aſſerting that the lace was not upon a red ground.

But what name will ſuit you, Sir, you who ſo laviſhly beſtow, about matters of ſuch mighty con-

* Page 13.

ſequence,

ſequence, the genteel appellation of arch liar, not only upon a man who is extremely fond of the truth, but likewiſe upon all the other hiſtorians who have writ the hiſtory of Charles XII. what name, Sir, will ſuit you, after the copy you give of the grand ſignor's letter to that monarch? Here follows the beginning of the letter.

"We * Sultan Baſha, to king Charles XII. by the grace of God king of Sweden and of the Goths, health, &c."

How could you, Sir, who have been among the Turks, and who ſeem to have learned from them not to be very nice in the choice of your words, how could you be ignorant of their ſtile? What Turkiſh emperor ever deſigned himſelf "Sultan Baſha?" What letter of the divan ever began in this manner? What prince ever wrote that he would ſend plenipotentiaries, the firſt opportunity, in order to learn the particulars of a battle? what letter of the grand ſignor ever concluded with this expreſſion, "To the protection of God?" In fine, when did you ever ſee an expreſs from Conſtantinople dated in the year of the creation, and not in that of the Hegira? The iman of the auguſt ſultan, who ſhall write the hiſtory of that great emperor and his ſublime viziers, may well give you many opprobrious appellations, if the Turkiſh politeneſs admits of ſuch ruſticity.

Does it then become you, Sir, after the production of ſuch a piece as this, which would offend that ſame Mr. Baron Puffendorf, to exclaim againſt a lie about a red coat?

* Page 137.

Beſides,

Beſides, are you a zealous advocate for the truth, when you conceal the cruelties exerciſed by the chamber of liquidations under Charles XI. when, in ſpeaking of Patkul, you pretend to forget that he defended the rights of the Livonians, who had committed them to his charge; of thoſe ſame Livonians who now live happily under the mild government of the illuſtrious Semiramis of the North? This, Sir, is not barely to betray the truth; it is to betray the cauſe of mankind; it is to fail in your duty to your illuſtrious country, which is an enemy to oppreſſion.

Ceaſe then in your compilation, to beſtow your Vandalic and Gothic epithets upon thoſe who write hiſtory: ceaſe to aſſume to yourſelf a right of employing that ſame barbarous pedantry which you impute to Puffendorf.

Do you know, Sir, that Puffendorf is an author ſometimes as incorrect as he is faſhionable? do you know that he is read, becauſe he is only one of the kind that was tolerable in his time? do you know that thoſe whom you call arch liars, would bluſh if they did not underſtand the hiſtory of the world better than your Puffendorf? do you know that Mr. de la Martiniere corrected more than a thouſand errors in the laſt edition of that book?

Let us open this book at a venture, which is ſo univerſally known. I light upon the article of the popes. He ſays, in ſpeaking of Julius II. "That he left behind him, as well as Alexander "VI. a bad name." Nevertheleſs the Italians revere the memory of Julius II. They conſider him as a great man, who, after having preſided in four conclaves, and commanded armies, purſued, even to his grave, the glorious ſcheme he had *formed of* chacing the barbarians from Italy. He

was

was a lover of the arts; he laid the foundation of that church, which is the wonder of the univerſe; he encouraged painting, ſculpture, and architecture, and, at the ſame time, he rekindled the extinguiſhed valour of the Romans. The Italians deſpiſe, and with good reaſon too, the ridiculous manner in which the greateſt part of foreigners write the hiſtory of the popes. We ought to be capable to diſtinguiſh the pontiff from the ſovereign: we ought to be capable, though born at Stockholm, to entertain a high opinion of the popes: we ought to remember the ſaying of the great count de Medicis, viz. "That kingdoms are not governed with pater-noſters." In a word, a hiſtorian ſhould be a man of no country, and of no party.

If we again open baron Puffendorf's book, we ſhall find it aſſerted, in the article of Mary queen of England, daughter of Henry VIII. "That ſhe could not be recognized as his legitimate daughter without the authority of the pope." What a croud of errors in theſe few words! ſhe had been recognized by the parliament: and beſides, what need had ſhe of the aſſiſtance of Rome, in order to confirm her legitimation, ſince it never had been either the intereſt or the intention of the Romiſh church to annul the marriage of her mother?

In reading the article of Charles V. I find that, before the year 1516, Charles had always in his eye his famous maxim, *ne plus ultra*: but he was then but fifteen years of age; and that motto was not compoſed till a long time after.

Shall we, on account of theſe errors, pronounce Puffendorf to be an arch liar? no: we will rather acknowledge that, in ſuch an extenſive work, a few miſtakes are excuſable; and we would entreat

you,

you, Sir, to be more accurate than he is; more thoroughly acquainted than you yet ſeem to be with the ſtile of the Turks, more polite with the French; in a word, to be more juſt and judicious in the choice of the facts you relate.

Among the many advantages with which the art of printing hath been attended, this is one inconvenience, that crouds of ſcandalous pamphlets are publiſhed, to the diſgrace of genius and of good manners. Wherever there are many writers there are many libels: theſe wretched performances, frequently produced in France, paſs current in the North, in the ſame manner as our bad wines are ſold there for Burgundy and Champaign. The former are read, and the latter are drank, often with the ſame want of taſte; but men of real knowledge will always deſpiſe what France rejects.

You quote, Sir, ſome pieces which are altogether unworthy the notice of the chaplain of Charles XII. Your tranſlator, Mr. Walmoth, hath honeſtly informed us, in his notes, that ſome of theſe are ſuch wretched and obſcure ſatires, that any gentleman would be aſhamed to cite them.

The duties of an hiſtorian are many and various. Allow me to remind you of two of them, which are of ſome conſequence; theſe are, never to rail, and never to be tedious. For the firſt I can eaſily excuſe you, becauſe your book will be the leſs read; but for the laſt I cannot poſſibly forgive you, becauſe I have been obliged to read it. In other reſpects, Sir, I am with all poſſible regard, your moſt humble, and moſt obedient ſervant.

THE

The SCEPTICISM of HISTORY.

INcredulity, let us remember, according to Ariſtotle, is the foundation of all knowledge. This maxim ought to be attended to by all thoſe who read hiſtory, and eſpecially ancient hiſtory. What an infinite number of abſurd facts! what a confuſed heap of incoherent fables that ſhock the common ſenſe of mankind! of theſe do not believe a ſingle ſyllable. There were kings, conſuls, and decemvirs at Rome; the Romans deſtroyed Carthage; Cæſar vanquiſhed Pompey; all this is true. But when you are told that Caſtor and Pollux fought for that people; that a veſtal ſet a loaded ſhip a float by the touch of her girdle; that a gulph was ſhut up by Curtius throwing himſelf into it; do not believe one word of it. You every where read of prodigies, of predictions accompliſhed, of miraculous cures performed in the temple of Æſculapius; do not believe a word of them. But a hundred witneſſes have ſigned the verbal proceſs of theſe miracles engraved on tables of braſs; and the temples were filled with votaries who atteſted theſe cures. That there have been knaves and fools who have atteſted what they never ſaw; that there have been devotees who have made preſents to the prieſts of Eſculapius when their children have been cured of a rheumatiſm; this you may believe: but with regard to the miracles of Eſculapius, do not believe a word of them.

But the Egyptian prieſts were all ſorcerers, and Herodotus admires their profound ſkill in witchcraft: do not believe one word of what Herodotus tells you.

With me every thing that is prodigious is incredible. But ought I to extend my incredulity to thoſe matters, which, though within the ordinary courſe of human affairs, are nevertheleſs deſtitute of moral probability?

For inſtance, Plutarch aſſures us that Cæſar, completely armed, threw himſelf into the ſea of Alexandria, holding ſome papers which he was unwilling to wet, in one hand, and ſwimming with the other.

Do not believe a word of this ſtory which Plutarch tells you. Rather believe Cæſar himſelf, who does not ſpeak a word of it in his Commentaries; and be aſſured that when a man throws himſelf into the ſea with ſome papers in his hand, he muſt neceſſarily wet them *.

You will find in Quintus Curtius, that Alexander and his generals were ſurpriſed when they beheld the ebbing and flowing of the ſea, a thing which to them was equally new and unexpected; do not believe a word of it.

It is probable enough that Alexander killed Clitus in a fit of drunkenneſs, and that he loved Epheſtion as Socrates loved Alcibiades; but it is extremely improbable that the diſciple of Ariſtotle ſhould be ignorant of the ebbing and flowing of the ſea. There were philoſophers in his army; it was ſufficient to have been on the Eu-

* This, we apprehend, is meer cavilling. If the Commentaries were written on rolls of the papyrus, one dip in the ſea, at the firſt plunge, would do very little damage to the writing: but if the contents were written with a ſtylus on wax tablets, according to the cuſtom of the Romans, the water would have no effect at all; and in that caſe, Cæſar muſt have held up his arm, that the tablets might not oppoſe or retard his motion in ſwimming.

phrates, at the mouth of which there were tides, in order to be acquainted with this phenomenon *. Alexander had travelled into Africa, the coaſts of which are waſhed by the ocean. Is it poſſible that his admiral Nearchus could be ignorant of that which was known to every boy on the banks of the river Indus? Such ſtupid improbabilities, repeated in ſo many authors, have too much diſcredited the veracity of hiſtorians.

Father Maimbourg relates, after a hundred others, that two Jews promiſed the empire to Leo the Iſaurian, provided that when he ſhould be emperor, he would deſtroy images. What intereſt, pray, had theſe two Jews in hindering the Chriſtians from having paintings? how could theſe two wretched creatures promiſe the empire? is it not offering an inſult to the underſtanding of the reader, to entertain him with ſuch fables as theſe?

It muſt be confeſſed, that Mezerai, in his ſtiff, low, and unequal ſtile, intermixes with the ill-digeſted facts which he relates, many abſurdities of the ſame nature. At one time it is Henry V. of England, who was crowned king of France at Paris, who died of the hemorroids for having preſumed, ſays he, to ſeat himſelf on the throne of our kings: at another, it is St. Michael who appeared to Joan of Arc.

* Whether or not Nearchus was acquainted with the flux and reflux of the ſea, which by the bye, he could not have learned in the ſeas of Italy and Greece; he might have been aſtoniſhed at the great extent of the ſhore that was left dry by the ebb of the ocean, in ſuch a remote country as the Eaſt Indies.

I do not believe even eye-witneſſes, when they report things inconſiſtent with common ſenſe. The ſieur de Joinville, or rather he who has tranſlated his Gaulic hiſtory into ancient French, may aſſure me, if they will, that the emirs of Egypt, after having aſſaſſinated their ſultan, offered the crown to St. Lewis, their priſoner: they might as well tell me that we had offered the crown of France to a Turk. What likelihood that the Mahometans ſhould ever think of chuſing for their ſovereign a man whom they could regard in no other light than as a leader of barbarians, whom they had taken in battle, who neither underſtood their laws nor their language, and who was the capital enemy of their religion?

I give no more credit to the ſieur de Joinville, when he tells me this tale, than when he informs me that the Nile overflowed at St. Remy, in the beginning of October. I will likewiſe venture to call in queſtion the ſtory of the old man of the mountain, who, upon the report of a cruſade undertaken by St. Lewis, diſpatched two aſſaſſins to kill him at Paris; and, upon a freſh report of his extraordinary virtue, ſent off next day two couriers to countermand his firſt orders. This account hath too much the air of an Arabian fable.

I will boldly tell Mezerai, father Daniel, and all the hiſtorians, that I do not believe a ſtorm of rain and hail made Edward III. return to his right ſenſes, and procured peace to Philip de Valois. Conquerors are not ſo devote, nor do they make peace on account of rain *.

No

* The greateſt minds are often actuated by the moſt capricious motives. If we ſuppoſe that the ſoul of Edward III. was influenced either by the terrors of ſuperſtiti

Nothing, to be ſure, is more probable than crimes; yet ought they at leaſt to be well atteſted. Mezerai makes mention of more than ſixty princes who have been poiſoned; but this he affirms without any proof; and a common report ſhould be given as no better than a common report.

I will not even believe Titus Livius, when he tells me that the phyſician of Pyrrhus offered to poiſon his maſter, provided the Romans would pay him a certain ſum of money. Hardly at that time had the Romans any money at all; and

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ſition, or the ſentiments of humanity, we ſhall ſee no reaſon to withold our credit from this incident, which is recorded by all the hiſtorians. In the year 1360, Edward having invaded France, and filled that country with horror and devaſtation, while he was advancing at the head of his army, within two leagues of Chartres, he was overtaken by a terrible tempeſt, which he conſidered as a dreadful viſitation from heaven. The peals of thunder and flaſhes of lightning, intermingled with deluges of rain, ſmote the hearts of his beſt warriors with diſmay: but, what made the ſtrongeſt impreſſion upon Edward's own mind, was the havock occaſioned by a terrible ſhower of hail, which in a moment laid a thouſand of his beſt troops, and ſix times that number of horſes, dead upon the ſpot. Deeply affected by the ſcene, he threw himſelf from his horſe, upon the ground, and ſtretching his hands towards the church at Chartres, ſolemnly vowed to God, that he would ſeriouſly incline his mind to peace, if it could be obtained on equitable terms. Now we ſhould be glad to know what circumſtance of this tranſaction is incredible, or even improbable? We would aſk Mr. de Voltaire, whether he would not have had much more reaſon to doubt the abdication of Charles V. if the truth of the fact was to be determined by its credibility. We may once for all obſerve, that nothing can be more abſurd than the attempt to deduce from general canons, the motives of particular actions, which depend upon ſuch a variety of weakneſs, peculiarity, and caprice.

Pyrrhus had wherewithal to purchaſe the republic, had it been expoſed to ſale. The place of firſt phyſician to Pyrrhus was probably more lucrative than that of conſul. I will not believe ſuch a ſtory as this, until I find it indiſputably proved, that a firſt phyſician of one of our kings engaged to poiſon his patient, upon receiving a reward from a Swiſs canton.

Let us likewiſe ſuſpect whatever appears to be exaggerated. An innumerable army of Perſians checked, at the Straits of Thermopylæ, by three hundred Spartans, does not ſtagger my faith; the ſituation of the ground renders the adventure probable. Charles XII. with eight thouſand hardy veterans, defeated at Narva about eighty thouſand half armed Ruſſians; I admire, I believe the action. But when I read, that Simon de Montfort, with nine hundred ſoldiers*, divided into three bodies, beat a hundred thouſand men, I then repeat, "That I do not believe a word of it." I am told indeed that it was a miracle; but is it ſo very certain that God performed a miracle in favour of Simon de Montfort?

I would call in queſtion the battle of Charles XII. at Bendar, were it not ſufficiently atteſted by many eye-witneſſes, and did not the character of that prince render ſuch a romantic inſtance of heroiſm extremely probable. That ſcepticiſm

* Such exploits as theſe were often atchieved by Europeans, both in the Eaſt and Weſt Indies: nor are they at all ſurpriſing, if we conſider that the few were trained up to arms and diſcipline, and their antagoniſts a rude multitude without order and regulation, unarmed, unſupplied with neceſſaries, unprovided with ſubordinate command, raſh, obſtinate, fanatic, and encumbered even by the greatneſs of their own number.

which

which we ought to entertain with regard to particular facts, we ſhould likewiſe extend to the manners of foreign nations; let us refuſe our belief to every hiſtorian, ancient and modern, who relates things contrary to nature, and to the general character of the human mind.

All the firſt accounts of America talk of nothing but anthropophagi, or man-eaters; and to read them, one would imagine that the Americans eat human fleſh as commonly as we eat mutton. The truth, when fully known, amounts only to this, that a ſmall number of Perſians were eat by their conquerors, inſtead of being eat by the worms *.

The new Puffendorf, as incorrect as the old one, ſays, that in 1589, an Engliſhman and four women, having eſcaped from a ſhipwreck which they had ſuffered in a voyage to Madagaſcar, landed on a deſert iſland; and that the Engliſhman laboured with ſo much ſucceſs, that in 1667, there were found on this iſland, which was called Pines, no leſs than twelve thouſand handſome Engliſh proteſtants.

The ancients, and their numerous credulous compilers among the moderns, are perpetually telling us, that at Babylon, the beſt regulated city in the univerſe, all the maids and married women proſtituted themſelves once a year in the temple of Venus. I can eaſily believe, that in

* If we may believe the moſt creditable hiſtorians who have written of America and Africa, the Caribbee Indians feaſted on human fleſh, and were even ſo dainty in this particular, that the priſoners deſtined for the market were fattened and even caſtrated, to render them the more plump and delicious. All the caciques in South America, and Motezuma in particular, had diſhes of human fleſh ſerved every day at their tables; and in the kingdom of Congo in Africa, human fleſh uſed to be ſold publicly in ſhambles.

Babylon, as in other places, a man might have a little pleaſure for his money; but I can never allow myſelf to think, that in a city, the beſt governed of any that were then in the world, all the fathers and huſbands ſent their daughters and wives to a market of public proſtitution, and that this decent traffic * was carried on by the expreſs orders of the legiſlature. We every day ſee publiſhed a hundred ſtupid ſtories of the ſame kind, concerning the cuſtoms of the Orientals; and where we have one traveller like Chardin, we have many thouſands like Paul Lucas.

Such, however, is not the hiſtory of Charles XII. On the contrary, I can aſſure the reader, that if ever hiſtory deſerved credit, this in a particular manner is intitled to that diſtinction. I compoſed it, as is well known, from the memoirs of Mr. Fabricius, of the Meſſrs. de Villelongue, and de Fierville, and from the accounts of ſeveral eye-witneſſes. But as theſe witneſſes did not ſee every thing, and ſometimes ſaw things in a falſe light, I have been led, by their means, into more than one error; not indeed concerning the eſſential facts, but only with regard to ſome private anecdotes, which, however indifferent in themſelves, ſerve as matter of triumph to the little critics.

I afterwards corrected this hiſtory by the military journal of Mr. Alderfeld, which is very accurate, and which aſſiſted me greatly in rectifying ſome facts and dates.

* Is there any thing more ſurpriſing in this circumſtance, than in the practice of the Romans, (another polite people,) who lent their wives to one another occaſionally? is this proſtitution more repugnant to the laws of decorum, than were the myſteries of the Bona Dea, or the orges of the Bacchanalians among the Greeks, who were undoubtedly the *moſt* civilized nation in the known world?

I like-

I likewiſe peruſed the hiſtory written by Mr. Norberg, chaplain and confeſſor of Charles XII. This is a work very ill digeſted, and very ill wrote; it is crowded with a variety of trifling incidents foreign to the ſubject; and even the grand events are rendered trifling, by the inſipid manner of relating them. It is a collection of ſuch reſcripts, declarations, and manifeſtos, as are uſually publiſhed in the name of kings, when they are at war. Theſe neither ſerve to point out the cauſes of events, nor to give us more diſtinct ideas of military and political tranſactions; and beſides, they are intolerably tirkſome to the reader. A writer can, at beſt, but conſult them occaſionally, in order to derive from them a little information; in the ſame manner as an architect makes uſe of rubbiſh in raiſing an edifice.

Among the public pieces, with which Norberg hath interlarded his wretched hiſtory, there are ſome which are even falſe and abſurd; ſuch as the letter of Achmet, the Turkiſh emperor, whom this hiſtorian calls ſultan baſha, by the grace of God*.

This ſame Norberg makes the king of Sweden ſay what that monarch never did, nor ever could ſay, in the affair of Staniſlaus. He pretends that Charles XII. told the primate, by way of anſwer to his objections, that Staniſlaus had gained a great many friends in his journey to Italy. Certain, however, it is, that Staniſlaus never was in Italy, as that monarch hath himſelf aſſured me. After all, what matters it, whether a Pole, in the ſixteenth century, travelled into Italy or not for his amuſement? What an infinite number of uſeleſs facts ought to be retrenched from hiſtory!

* See Mr. de Voltaire's letter to Mr. Norberg.

and how do I felicitate myſelf in having abridged the hiſtory of Charles XII!

Norberg had neither judgment nor genius, nor a ſufficient knowledge of the world; and it was for that reaſon, perhaps, that Charles XII. thought proper to chuſe him for his confeſſor. Whether he made that prince a good Chriſtian or not, I will not take upon me to determine, but moſt undoubtedly he has not made him a hero; and the memory of Charles XII. would be buried in oblivion, were it not tranſmitted to poſterity by abler hiſtorians than Mr. Norberg.

It may not here be improper to inform the reader, that there appeared, ſome years ago, a ſmall pamphlet, entitled, "Hiſtorical and Critical Remarks on the Hiſtory of Charles XII. by Mr. de Voltaire." This little performance was compoſed from ſome anecdotes of count Poniatowſki. Theſe contained his anſwers to ſome freſh queſtions which I had propoſed to him in his laſt journey to Paris. But his ſecretary having taken a double copy of them, they fell into the hands of a Dutch bookſeller, who did not fail to publiſh them; and the corrector of the preſs gave them the title of "Critical," in order to procure them a better ſale. This is one of thoſe petty larcenies, which are ſometimes practiſed in the bookſelling trade.

La Motraye, a domeſtic of Mr. Fabricius, has likewiſe publiſhed ſome remarks on this hiſtory. Among the errors and trifles with which this critique of la Motraye is filled, there are ſome things that are true and uſeful, and of theſe I have taken care to avail myſelf in the latter editions of my hiſtory, eſpecially in that of 1739. An hiſtorian *ſhould neglect nothing*: he ought, if poſſible, to *conſult* both kings and valets de chambre.

A Du-

A Discourse on the History of Charles XII. Prefixed to the firſt Edition.

FEW are the princes whoſe lives merit a particular hiſtory. In vain have moſt of them been the objects of ſlander, or of flattery. Small is the number of thoſe whoſe memory is preſerved; and that number would be ſtill more inconſiderable, were none but the good remembered.

The princes who have the beſt claim to immortality are ſuch as have benefited mankind. Thus, while France endures, the affection of Lewis XII for his people will ever be had in grateful remembrance. The great failings of Francis I. will be excuſed, for the ſake of the arts and ſciences of which he was the father. Bleſſed will be the memory of Henry IV. who conquered his kingdom as much by his clemency as by his valour. And the munificence of Lewis XIV. in protecting the arts which owed their birth to Francis I. will be ever extolled.

It is for a very different reaſon, that the memory of bad princes is preſerved; like fires, plagues, and inundations, they are remembered only for the miſchief they have done.

Conquerors hold a middle rank between good kings and tyrants, but are moſt akin to the latter. As they have a glaring reputation, we are deſirous of knowing the moſt minute circumſtances of their lives; for ſuch is the weakneſs of mankind, that they admire thoſe who have rendered themſelves remarkable for wickedneſs, and talk with greater pleaſure of the deſtroyer than of the founder of an empire.

As for thoſe princes who have neither diſtinguiſhed themſelves in peace nor in war; who have neither been remarkable for great virtues nor great vices; their lives furniſh ſo little matter, either for imitation or inſtruction, that they are not worthy of being committed to writing. Of ſo many emperors of Rome, Greece, Germany, and Muſcovy; of ſo many ſultans, caliphs, popes, and kings; how few are there, whoſe names deſerve to be recorded any where but in chronological tables, where they only ſerve to mark the different epochas.

There is a vulgar among princes, as well as among the reſt of mankind; yet ſuch is the itch of writing, that no ſooner is a prince dead, than the world is filled with volumes under the title of memoirs and hiſtories of his life, and anecdotes of his court. By theſe means books have been multiplied in ſuch a manner, that were a man to live an hundred years, and to employ them all in reading, he would not have time to run over what hath been publiſhed relating to the hiſtory of Europe alone, for the two laſt centuries.

This eager and unreaſonable deſire of tranſmitting uſeleſs ſtories to poſterity, and of fixing the attention of future ages upon common events, proceeds from a weakneſs extremely incident to thoſe who have lived in courts, and have unhappily been engaged in the management of public affairs. They conſider the court in which they have lived as the moſt magnificent in the world; their king as the greateſt monarch; and the affairs in which they have been concerned as the moſt important that ever were tranſacted: and they vainly imagine, that poſterity will view them *in the ſame light.*

If a prince undertakes a war, or his court is embroiled in cabals and intrigues; if he buys the friendſhip of one of his neighbours, or ſells his own to another; if, after ſome victories and defeats, he at laſt makes peace with his enemies; his ſubjects are ſo warm and intereſted by the part which they themſelves have acted in theſe ſcenes, that they regard their own age as the moſt glorious that hath exiſted ſince the creation. But what is the conſequence? Why, this prince dies; new meaſures are adopted; the intrigues of his court, his miſtreſſes, his miniſters, his generals, his wars, and even himſelf, is forgotten.

Ever ſince the time that Chriſtian princes have been endeavouring to cheat one another, and have alternately been making war and peace, they have ſigned an immenſe number of treaties, and fought as many battles; they have performed many glorious, and many infamous actions. Nevertheleſs, ſhould all this heap of tranſactions be tranſmitted to poſterity, they would moſt of them deſtroy and annihilate each other; and the memory of thoſe only would remain which have produced great revolutions, or which, being related by able writers, are preſerved from oblivion, like the pictures of obſcure perſons, drawn by a maſterly hand.

Senſible then, as we are, of the truth of theſe obſervations, we ſhould not have added a particular hiſtory of Charles XII. king of Sweden, to the infinite number of books with which the world is already crowded, were it not that he and his rival, Peter Alexiowitz, by far the greater man of the two, are univerſally allowed to be the moſt illuſtrious perſons that have appeared for upwards of twenty

twenty centuries. The trifling pleaſure, however, of relating extraordinary events was not our only motive for engaging in this work; we flattered ourſelves that it might be of ſome little uſe to princes, ſhould it ever happen to fall into their hands. No king, ſurely, can be ſo incorrigible as, when he reads the hiſtory of Charles XII. not to be cured of the vain ambition of making conqueſts. Where is the prince that can ſay, I have more courage, more virtues, more reſolution, greater ſtrength of body, greater ſkill in war, or better troops, than Charles XII? And yet, if, with all theſe advantages, and after ſo many victories, Charles was ſo unfortunate, what fate may other princes expect, who, with leſs capacity and fewer reſources, ſhall entertain the ſame ambitious views?

This hiſtory is compoſed from the relations of ſome perſons of diſtinction, who lived ſeveral years with Charles XII. and with Peter the Great, emperor of Muſcovy; and who having retired, long after the death of theſe princes, into a country of liberty, can have no intereſt in concealing the truth. Mr. Fabricius, who lived in the moſt intimate familiarity with Charles XII. Mr. de Fierville, the French ambaſſador; Mr. de Villelongue, a colonel in the Swediſh ſervice, and even Mr. Poniatowſki, have all of them contributed their ſhare in furniſhing me with materials.

In this work we have not ventured to advance a ſingle fact, without conſulting eye-witneſſes of undoubted veracity; a circumſtance that renders this hiſtory very different from thoſe gazettes, which have already been publiſhed under the title of lives of Charles XII. If we have omitted ſome *little* ſkirmiſhes between the Swediſh and Muſco-

vite

vite officers, the reaſon is, that we mean to write the hiſtory, not of theſe officers, but only of the king of Sweden, and even of his life none but the moſt important events. The hiſtory of a prince, in our opinion, is not to relate every thing he did, but only what he did worthy of being tranſmitted to poſterity.

Here it may not be improper to remark, that many things, which were true at the time of writing this hiſtory in 1728, are not ſo at preſent. Commerce, for inſtance, begins to be more encouraged in Sweden. The Poliſh infantry are better diſciplined, and are provided with regimental clothes, a convenience which they then wanted. In reading hiſtory, one ought always to remember the time in which the author wrote. To peruſe the memoirs of cardinal de Retz, one would take the French for a ſet of enthuſiaſts, breathing nothing but faction, madneſs, and civil diſcord. To read the hiſtory of the happy years of Lewis XIV. one would think they were born to obey, to conquer, and to cultivate the polite arts. And, ſhould any one conſult the memoirs of the firſt years of Lewis XV. he will find them devoted to luxury and avarice, and too regardleſs of every thing elſe. The Spaniards at preſent are not the Spaniards of Charles V. and yet they may be ſo in a few years. The Engliſh of this age bear no more reſemblance to the fanatics in Cromwell's time, than the monks and monſignori, that crowd the ſtreets of Rome, do to the ancient Scipios. I doubt much whether the Swediſh troops could be rendered, all of a ſudden, ſo hardy and warlike as were thoſe of Charles XII. We ſay of a man, that he was brave at ſuch a time;

time; in like manner we ſhould ſay in ſpeaking of a nation, they were of this or that character in ſuch a year, and under ſuch a government.

Should any prince or miniſter meet with diſagreeable truths in this book, let them remember, that, as they act in a public ſtation, they ought to give the public an account of their conduct. Such is the price they muſt pay for their greatneſs. The buſineſs of an hiſtorian is to record, not to flatter; and the only way to oblige mankind to ſpeak well of us, is to contribute all that lies in our power to their happineſs and welfare.

THE HISTORY OF CHARLES XII. KING of SWEDEN.

BOOK I.

THE CONTENTS.

An Abridgment of the Hiſtory of SWEDEN, to the Reign of CHARLES XII. The Education of that Prince, and an Account of his Enemies. Character of the Czar PETER ALEXIOWITZ. Curious Anecdotes relative to that Prince and the RUSSIAN Nation. MUSCOVY, POLAND, and DENMARK, unite againſt CHARLES XII.

SWEDEN and Finland make up a kingdom two hundred leagues broad, and three hundred long. This country reaches from the fifty-fifth degree of latitude, or thereabouts, to the ſeventieth. It lies under a very ſevere climate, which is hardly ever ſoftened either by the return

return of ſpring or of autumn. The winter prevails there nine months in the year. The ſcorching heats of the ſummer ſucceed immediately to the exceſſive cold of the winter. The froſt begins in the month of October, without any of thoſe imperceptible gradations, which in other countries uſher in the ſeaſons, and render the alteration more agreeable. Nature, in return, hath given to this cold climate a clear ſky and a pure air. The almoſt conſtant heat of the ſummer produces flowers and fruits in a very ſhort time. The long nights of the winter are tempered by the evening and morning twilights, which laſt for a greater or a leſs time, in proportion as the ſun is nearer to, or farther removed from Sweden; and the light of the moon, unobſcured by clouds, and encreaſed by the reflection of the ſnow that covers the ground, and frequently by the Aurora Borealis, makes it as convenient to travel in Sweden by night as by day. For want of paſture, the cattle there are ſmaller than in the more ſouthern parts of Europe; but the men are of a large ſtature, healthful from the purity of the air, and ſtrong from the ſeverity of the climate; they live to a great age, unleſs enfeebled by the immoderate uſe of wines and ſtrong liquors, of which the northern nations ſeem to be the more fond, the leſs nature hath indulged them with theſe commodities.

The Swedes are well made, ſtrong, and active, and capable of enduring the greateſt fatigue, want, and hunger. Born with a military genius, and high ſpirit, they are more brave than induſtrious, having long neglected, and even at preſent but little cultivating the arts of commerce, which alone can ſupply them with thoſe productions in which

which their country is deficient. It was chiefly from Sweden *, they ſay, (one part of which is ſtill called Gothland) that thoſe ſwarms of Goths iſſued forth, who like a deluge over-ran Europe, and wreſted it from the Romans, who had uſurped the dominion of that vaſt country, which they continued for the ſpace of five hundred years to harraſs by their tyranny, and to civilize by their laws.

The northern countries were much more populous at that time than they are at preſent. Religion, by allowing the men a plurality of wives, gave them an opportunity of furniſhing the ſtate with more ſubjects. The women themſelves knew no reproach but that of ſterility or idleneſs; and being as ſtrong and as laborious as the men, they bore children faſter and for a longer time. Sweden, however, with that part of Finland which it ſtill retains, does not contain above four millions of inhabitants. The ſoil is poor and barren; Schonen is the only province that bears wheat. The current coin of the kingdom does not exceed nine millions of livres. The public bank, which is the oldeſt in Europe, was at firſt eſtabliſhed from mere neceſſity; the copper and iron, in which their payments were formerly made, being too heavy to be tranſported.

* If our author had reflected with his uſual preciſion, he would have perceived that a cold, barren country, of the extent of Sweden, could not poſſibly furniſh one hundredth part of thoſe multitudes that deluged all Europe; and a little inquiry would have given him to underſtand, that the Goths themſelves came from Scythia or Tartary, which was called the *Officina Gentium*. It is now generally allowed that the Celtæ, the Goths, the Heruli, Vandals, and Huns, were all originally Tartars.

Swe-

Sweden preſerved its freedom without interruption to the middle of the fourteenth century. During that long period, the form of government was more than once altered; but all theſe alterations were in favour of liberty. The firſt magiſtrate was inveſted with the name of king, a title which, in different countries, is attended with very different degrees of power. In France and Spain it ſignifies an abſolute monarch: in Poland, Sweden, and England, it means the firſt man of the republic. This king could do nothing without the ſenate; and the ſenate depended upon the ſtates-general, which were frequently aſſembled. The repreſentatives of the nation, in theſe grand aſſemblies, were the gentry, the biſhops, and the deputies of the towns; and in proceſs of time, the very peaſants, a claſs of people unjuſtly deſpiſed in other places, and ſubject to ſlavery in almoſt all the northern countries, were admitted to a ſhare in the adminiſtration.

About the year 1492, this nation, ſo jealous of its liberty, and which ſtill piques itſelf on having conquered Rome about thirteen hundred years ago, was ſubjected to the yoke by a woman, and by a people leſs powerful than the Swedes.

Margaret of Valdemar, the Semiramis of the North, and queen of Denmark and Norway, ſubdued Sweden by force and ſtratagem, and united theſe three extenſive kingdoms into one mighty monarchy. After her death, Sweden was rent by civil wars; it alternately threw off and ſubmitted to the Daniſh yoke; was ſometimes governed by kings, and ſometimes by adminiſtrators. About the year 1520, this unhappy kingdom was horribly harraſſed by two tyrants: the one was Chriſtian II. king of Denmark, a monſter whoſe

whoſe character was entirely compoſed of vices, without the leaſt ingredient of virtue: the other an archbiſhop of Upſal, and primate of the kingdom, as barbarous as the former. Theſe two, by mutual agreement, cauſed the conſuls and the magiſtrates of Stockholm, together with ninety-four ſenators, to be ſeized in one day, and to be executed by the hand of the common hangman, under the frivolous pretence that they were excommunicated by the pope, for having dared to defend the rights of the ſtate againſt the encroachments of the archbiſhop.

While theſe two men, unanimous in their oppreſſive meaſures, and diſagreeing only about the diviſion of the ſpoil, domineered over Sweden with all the tyranny of the moſt abſolute deſpotiſm, and all the cruelty of the moſt implacable revenge, a new and unexpected event gave a ſudden turn to the ſtate of affairs in the North.

Guſtavus Vaſa, a young man, ſprung from the ancient kings of Sweden, aroſe from the foreſts of Dalecarlia, where he had long lain concealed, and came to deliver his country from bondage. He was one of thoſe great ſouls whom nature ſo ſeldom produces, and who are born with all the qualifications neceſſary to form the accompliſhed monarch. His handſome and ſtately perſon, and his noble and majeſtic air, gained him followers at firſt ſight. His eloquence, recommended by an engaging manner, was the more perſuaſive, the leſs it was artful. His enterpriſing genius formed thoſe projects which, though to the vulgar they may appear raſh, are conſidered only as bold in the eyes of great men, and which his courage and perſeverance enabled him to accompliſh. Brave with circumſpection, and mild and gentle in a fierce

fierce and cruel age, he was as virtuous as it is poſſible for the leader of a party to be.

Guſtavus Vaſa had been the hoſtage of Chriſtian, and had been detained a priſoner contrary to the law of nations. Having found means to eſcape from priſon, he had dreſſed himſelf in the habit of a peaſant, and in that diſguiſe had wandered about in the mountains and woods of Dalecarlia, where he was reduced to the neceſſity of working in the copper-mines, at once to procure a livelihood, and to conceal himſelf from his enemies. Buried, as he was, in theſe ſubterraneous caverns, he had the boldneſs to form the deſign of dethroning the tyrant. With this view he diſcovered himſelf to the peaſants, who regarded him as one of thoſe ſuperior beings to whom the common herd of mankind are naturally inclined to ſubmit. Theſe ſavage boors he ſoon improved into hardy and warlike ſoldiers. He attacked Chriſtian and the archbiſhop, beat them in ſeveral encounters, baniſhed them both from Sweden, and, at laſt, was juſtly choſen by the ſtates king of that country, of which he had been the deliverer.

Hardly was he eſtabliſhed on the throne, when he undertook an enterprize ſtill more difficult than his conqueſts. The real tyrants of the ſtate were the biſhops, who having engroſſed into their own hands almoſt all the riches of Sweden, employed their ill-got wealth in oppreſſing the ſubjects, and in making war upon the king. This power was the more formidable, as, in the opinion of the ignorant populace, it was held to be ſacred. Guſtavus puniſhed the catholic religion for the crimes of its miniſters; and, in leſs than two years, introduced Lutheraniſm into Sweden, rather by the arts of policy, than by the influence

of

of authority. Having thus conquered the kingdom, as himſelf was wont to ſay, from the Danes and the clergy, he reigned a happy and an abſolute monarch to the age of ſeventy, and then died full of glory, leaving his family and religion in quiet poſſeſſion of the throne.

One of his deſcendants was that Guſtavus Adolphus, who is commonly called the great Guſtavus. He conquered Ingria, Livonia, Bremen, Verden, Wiſmar, and Pomerania, not to mention above an hundred places in Germany, which, after his death, were yielded up by the Swedes. He ſhook the throne of Ferdinand II. and protected the Lutherans in Germany, an attempt in which he was ſecretly aſſiſted by the pope himſelf, who dreaded the power of the emperor much more than the prevalence of hereſy. He it was that by his victories effectually contributed to humble the houſe of Auſtria; though the glory of that enterpriſe is uſually aſcribed to cardinal de Richelieu, who well knew how to procure himſelf the reputation of thoſe great actions, which Guſtavus was contented with ſimply performing. He was juſt upon the point of extending the war beyond the Danube, and perhaps of dethroning the emperor, when he was killed, in the thirty-ſeventh year of his age, at the battle of Lutzen, which he gained over Walſtein, carrying along with him to his grave the name of Great, the lamentations of the North, and the eſteem of his enemies.

His daughter Chriſtina, a lady of an extraordinary genius, was much fonder of converſing with men of learning, than of reigning over a people, whoſe knowledge was entirely confined to the art of war. She became as famous for quitting the throne as her anceſtors had been for

for obtaining or ſecuring it. The proteſtants have loaded her memory with many injurious aſperſions, as if it were impoſſible for a perſon to be poſſeſſed of great virtues without adhering to Luther; and the papiſts have piqued themſelves too much on the converſion of a woman who had nothing to recommend her but her taſte for philoſophy. She retired to Rome, where ſhe paſſed the reſt of her days in the midſt of thoſe arts of which ſhe was ſo paſſionately fond, and for the ſake of which ſhe had renounced a crown at twenty-ſeven years of age.

Before her abdication, ſhe prevailed upon the ſtates of Sweden to elect her couſin, Charles Guſtavus X. ſon to the count palatine, and duke of Deux-Ponts, as her ſucceſſor. This prince added new conqueſts to thoſe of Guſtavus Adolphus. He preſently carried his arms into Poland, where he gained the famous battle of Warſaw, which laſted for three days. He waged a long and a ſucceſsful war with the Danes; beſieged them in their capital; re-united Schonen to Sweden; and confirmed the duke of Holſtein in the poſſeſſion of Sleſwick, at leaſt for a time. At laſt, having met with a reverſe of fortune, and concluded a peace with his enemies, he turned his ambition againſt his ſubjects, and formed the deſign of eſtabliſhing a deſpotic government in Sweden. But, like the great Guſtavus, he died in the thirty-ſeventh year of his age, without being able to finiſh his project, the full accompliſhment of which was reſerved for his ſon, Charles XI.

Charles XI. was a warrior, like all his anceſtors, and more deſpotic than any of them. He aboliſhed the authority of the ſenate, which was declared to be the ſenate of the king, and

not of the kingdom. He was prudent, vigilant, indefatigable; qualities that muſt certainly have ſecured him the love of his ſubjects, had not his deſpotic meaſures been more apt to excite their fear than to gain their affections.

In 1680 he married Ulrica Eleonora, daughter to Frederic III. king of Denmark, a princeſs eminent for her virtue, and worthy of greater confidence than her huſband was pleaſed to repoſe in her. Of this marriage, on the 27th of June 1682, was born king Charles XII. the moſt extraordinary man, perhaps, that ever appeared in the world. In him were united all the great qualities of his anceſtors; nor had he any other fault or failing, but that he poſſeſſed all theſe virtues in too high a degree. This is the prince whoſe hiſtory we now purpoſe to write, and concerning whoſe perſon and actions we ſhall relate nothing but what is vouched by the beſt authority.

The firſt book which was put into his hands was Puffendorff's introduction to the hiſtory of Europe, that from thence he might acquire an early knowledge of his own dominions, and of thoſe of his neighbours. He next learned the German language, which he continued to ſpeak for the future, with the ſame fluency as his mother-tongue. At ſeven years of age he could manage a horſe; and the violent exerciſes in which he delighted, and which diſcovered his martial diſpoſition, ſoon procured him a vigorous conſtitution, capable to ſupport the incredible fatigues which his natural inclination always prompted him to undergo.

Though gentle in his infancy, he betrayed an inflexible obſtinacy. The only way to influence him was to awaken his ſenſe of honour; by mention-

ing the word glory, you might have obtained any thing from him. He had a great averſion to the Latin tongue; but as ſoon as he heard that the kings of Poland and Denmark underſtood it, he learned it with great expedition, and retained ſo much of it, as to be able to ſpeak it all the reſt of his life. The ſame means were employed to engage him to learn the French; but he could never be perſuaded to make uſe of that tongue, not even with the French ambaſſadors themſelves, who underſtood no other.

As ſoon as he had acquired a tolerable knowledge of the Latin, his teacher made him tranſlate Quintus Curtius; a book for which he conceived a great liking, rather on account of the ſubject than the ſtile. The perſon who explained this author to him having aſked him what he thought of Alexander: "I think (ſaid the prince) I could wiſh to be like him." "But (reſumed the preceptor) he only lived two and thirty years." "Ah! (replied he) and is not that enough, when one has conquered kingdoms?" The courtiers did not fail to carry theſe anſwers to the king his father, who would often cry out; "This child will excel me, and will even go beyond the great Guſtavus." One day he happened to be diverting himſelf in the royal apartment, in viewing two plans; the one of a town in Hungary, which the Turks had taken from the emperor; the other of Riga the capital of Livonia, a province conquered by the Swedes about a century before. Under the plan of the town in Hungary were written theſe words, taken from the book of Job: "The Lord hath given it to me, and the Lord hath taken it from me; bleſſed be the name of the Lord." The young prince having read this inſcription, imme-

immediately took a pencil, and wrote under the plan of Riga; "The Lord hath given it to me, and the devil ſhall not take it from me *." Thus, in the moſt indifferent actions of his childhood, his unconquerable ſpirit would frequently diſcover ſome traces of thoſe heroic qualities which characterize great ſouls, and which plainly indicated what ſort of a man he would one day prove.

He was but eleven years of age when he loſt his mother, who expired on the fifth of Auguſt 1693. The diſeaſe of which ſhe died was ſuppoſed to be owing to the bad uſage ſhe had received from her huſband, and to her own endeavours to conceal her vexation. Charles XI. had, by means of a certain court of juſtice, which was called the Chamber of Liquidations, and erected by his ſole authority, deprived a great number of his ſubjects of their wealth. Crowds of citizens ruined by this chamber, nobility, merchants, farmers, widows, and orphans, filled the ſtreets of Stockholm, and daily repaired to the gate of the palace to pour forth their unavailing complaints. The queen ſuccoured theſe unhappy people as much as lay in her power; ſhe gave them her money, her jewels, her furniture, and even her cloaths; and when ſhe had no more to give them, with tears in her eyes ſhe threw herſelf at her huſband's feet, beſeeching him to have pity on his wretched ſubjects. The king gravely anſwered her, "Madam, we took you to bring us children, not to give us advice." And from that time he treated

* This anecdote I give from the information of two French ambaſſadors, who reſided at the court of Sweden.

her with a ſeverity that is ſaid to have ſhortened her days.

He died four years after her, on the fifteenth of April 1697, in the forty-ſecond year of his age, and the thirty-ſeventh of his reign, at a time when the empire, Spain, and Holland, on the one ſide, and France on the other, had referred the deciſion of their quarrels to his arbitration, and when he had already concerted the terms of accommodation between theſe different powers.

He left to his ſon, who was then fifteen years of age, a throne well eſtabliſhed and reſpected abroad; ſubjects poor, but valiant and loyal; together with a treaſury in good order, and managed by able miniſters.

Charles XII. at his acceſſion to the throne, found himſelf the abſolute and undiſturbed maſter, not only of Sweden and Finland, but alſo of Livonia, Carelia, Ingria, Wiſmar, Vibourg, the iſlands of Rugen and Oeſel, and the fineſt part of Pomerania, together with the dutchy of Bremen and Verden, all of them the conqueſts of his anceſtors, ſecured to the crown by long poſſeſſion, and by the ſolemn treaties of Munſter and Oliva, and ſupported by the terror of the Swediſh arms. The peace of Ryſwick, which was begun under the auſpices of the father, being fully concluded under thoſe of the ſon, he found himſelf the mediator of Europe, from the firſt moment of his reign.

The laws of Sweden fix the majority of their kings at the age of fifteen; but Charles XI. who was entirely abſolute, put off, by his laſt-will, the majority of his ſon to the age of eighteen. In this he favoured the ambitious views of his mother *Eduiga*-Eleonora of Holſtein, dowager of Charles

Charles X. who was appointed by the king her ſon, guardian to the young king her grandſon, and regent of the kingdom, in conjunction with a council of five perſons.

The regent had had a ſhare in the management of public affairs during the reign of her ſon. She was now advanced in years; but her ambition, which was greater than her abilities, prompted her to entertain the pleaſing hopes of poſſeſſing authority for a long time, under the king her grandſon. She kept him at as great a diſtance as poſſible from all concern with the affairs of ſtate. The young prince paſſed his time either in hunting or in reviewing his troops, and would even ſometimes exerciſe with them; which amuſement ſeemed only to be the natural effect of his youthful vivacity. He never betrayed any diſſatisfaction ſufficient to alarm the regent, who flattered herſelf that the diſſipation of mind occaſioned by theſe diverſions would render him incapable of application, and leave her in poſſeſſion of the ſupreme power for a conſiderable time.

One day in the month of November, and in the ſame year in which his father died, when he had been taking a review of ſeveral regiments, and Piper the counſellor was ſtanding by him, he ſeemed to be abſorbed in a profound reverie. "May I take the liberty (ſaid Piper to him) of aſking your majeſty what you are thinking of ſo ſeriouſly?" "I am thinking (replied the prince) that I am capable of commanding thoſe brave fellows; and I don't chuſe that either they or I ſhould receive orders from a woman." Piper immediately ſeized this opportunity of making his fortune; but conſcious that his own intereſt was not ſufficient for the execution of ſuch a danger-

ous enterprize, as the removal of the queen from the regency, and the haſtening of the king's majority, he propoſed the affair to count Axel Sparre, a man of a daring ſpirit, and fond of popularity. Him he cajoled with the hopes of being the king's confident. The count readily ſwallowed the bait, and undertook the management of the whole matter, while all his labours only tended to promote the intereſt of Piper. The counſellors of the regency were ſoon drawn into the ſcheme, and forthwith proceeded to the execution of it, in order to recommend themſelves the more effectually to the king.

They went in a body to propoſe it to the queen, who little expected ſuch a declaration. The counſellors of the regency laid the matter before the ſtates-general, who were then aſſembled, and who were all unanimous in approving the propoſal. The point was carried with a rapidity that nothing could withſtand; ſo that Charles XII. had only to ſignify his deſire of reigning, and, in three days, the ſtates beſtowed the government upon him. The queen's power and credit fell in an inſtant. She afterwards led a private life, which was more ſuitable to her age, though leſs agreeable to her humour. The king was crowned on the twenty-fourth of December following. He made his entry into Stockholm on a ſorrel horſe ſhod with ſilver, having a ſcepter in his hand and a crown upon his head, amidſt the acclamations of a whole people, paſſionately fond of every novelty, and always conceiving great hopes from the reign of a young prince.

The ceremony of the conſecration and coronation belongs to the archbiſhop of Upſal. This is almoſt the only privilege that remains to him of the

the great number that were claimed by his predeceſſors. After having anointed the prince, according to cuſtom, he held the crown in his hand, in order to put it upon his head: Charles ſnatched it from him and crowned himſelf, regarding the poor prelate all the while with a ſtern look. The people, who are always dazzled by every thing that has an air of grandeur and magnificence, applauded this action of the king. Even thoſe who had groaned moſt ſeverely under the tyranny of the father, were fooliſh enough to commend the ſon for this inſtance of arrogance, which was a ſure pledge of their future ſlavery.

As ſoon as Charles was maſter of the kingdom, he made Piper his chief confident, entruſting him at the ſame time with the management of public affairs, and giving him all the power of a prime miniſter, without the odium of the name. A few days after he created him a count, which is a dignity of great eminence in Sweden, and not an empty title that may be aſſumed without any manner of importance, as with us in France.

The beginning of the king's reign gave no very favourable idea of his character. It was imagined that he had been more ambitious of obtaining the ſupreme power, than worthy of poſſeſſing it. True it is, he had no dangerous paſſion; but his conduct diſcovered nothing but the ſallies of youth, and the freaks of obſtinacy. He ſeemed to be equally proud and lazy. The ambaſſadors who reſided at his court, took him even for a perſon of mean capacity, and repreſented him as ſuch to their reſpective maſters*. The Swedes entertained the ſame opinion of him: nobody knew

* This is confirmed by original letters.

his real character: he did not even know it himſelf, until the ſtorm that ſuddenly aroſe in the North gave him an opportunity of diſplaying his great talents, which had hitherto lain concealed.

Three powerful princes, taking the advantage of his youth, conſpired his ruin almoſt at the ſame time. The firſt was his own couſin, Frederick IV. king of Denmark: the ſecond Auguſtus, elector of Saxony and king of Poland: Peter the Great, czar of Muſcovy, was the third, and the moſt dangerous. It will be neceſſary to unfold the origin of theſe wars, which produced ſuch great events: and to begin with Denmark.

Of the two ſiſters of Charles XII. the eldeſt was married to the duke of Holſtein, a young prince of an undaunted ſpirit and of a gentle diſpoſition. The duke, oppreſſed by the king of Denmark, repaired to Stockholm with his ſpouſe, and throwing himſelf into the arms of the king, earneſtly implored his aſſiſtance. This he hoped to obtain, as Charles was not only his brother-in-law, but was likewiſe the ſovereign of a people who bore an irreconcileable hatred to the Danes.

The ancient houſe of Holſtein, ſunk into that of Oldenburg, had been advanced by election to the throne of Denmark in 1449. All the kingdoms of the North were at that time elective; but the kingdom of Denmark ſoon after became hereditary. One of its kings, called Chriſtiern III. had ſuch a tender affection for his brother Adolphus, or, at leaſt, ſuch a regard for his intereſt, as is ſeldom to be met with among princes. He was deſirous of inveſting him with ſovereign power, and yet he could not diſmember his own dominions. He therefore divided with him the dutchies of Holſtein-Gottorp and Sleſwick, by an odd kind

of

of agreement, the ſubſtance of which was, that the deſcendants of Adolphus ſhould ever after govern Holſtein in conjunction with the kings of Denmark; that thoſe two dutchies ſhould belong to both in common; and that the king of Denmark ſhould be able to do nothing in Holſtein without the duke, nor the duke without the king. So ſtrange an union, of which, however, we have had within theſe few years a ſimilar inſtance in the ſame family, was, for near the ſpace of eighty years, the ſource of perpetual diſputes between the crown of Denmark and the houſe of Holſtein-Gottorp; the kings always endeavouring to oppreſs the dukes, and the dukes to render themſelves independent. A ſtruggle of this nature had coſt the laſt duke his liberty and ſovereignty, both which, however, he recovered at the conferences of Altena in 1689, by the interpoſition of Sweden, England, and Holland, who became guarantees for the execution of the treaty, But as a treaty between princes is frequently no more than a giving way to neceſſity, till ſuch time as the ſtronger ſhall be able to cruſh the weaker, the conteſt was revived with greater virulence than ever between the new king of Denmark and the young duke. And while the duke was at Stockholm, the Danes had already committed ſome acts of hoſtility in the country of Holſtein, and had entered into a ſecret agreement with the king of Poland, to attack the king of Sweden himſelf.

Frederick Auguſtus, elector of Saxony, whom neither the eloquence nor negociations of the abbé de Polignac, nor the great qualities of the prince of Conti, his competitor for the throne, had been able to prevent from being choſen king of Poland about two years before, was a prince

ſtill leſs remarkable for his incredible ſtrength of body than for his bravery and gallantry of ſoul. His court, next to that of Lewis XIV. was the moſt ſplendid of any in Europe. Never was prince more generous or munificent, or beſtowed his favours with a better grace. He had purchaſed the votes of one half of the Poliſh nobility, and overawed the other by the approach of a Saxon army. As he thought he ſhould have need of his troops in order to eſtabliſh himſelf the more firmly on the throne, he wanted a pretext for retaining them in Poland; and he therefore reſolved to employ them in attacking the king of Sweden, which he did on the following occaſion.

Livonia, the moſt beautiful and the moſt fruitful province of the North, belonged formerly to the knights of the Teutonick order. The Ruſſians, the Poles, and the Swedes, had ſeverally diſputed the poſſeſſion of it. The Swedes had carried it from all the reſt about an hundred years ago; and it had been formally ceded to them by the peace of Oliva.

The late king Charles XI. amidſt his ſeverities to his ſubjects in general, had not ſpared the Livonians. He had ſtripped them of their privileges, and of part of their eſtates. Patkul, who unhappily hath ſince become famous for his tragical death, was deputed by the nobility of Livonia to carry to the throne the complaints of the province. He addreſſed his maſter in a ſpeech, reſpectful indeed, but bold, and full of that manly eloquence, which calamity, when joined to courage, never fail to inſpire. But kings too frequently conſider theſe public addreſſes as no more than vain ceremonies, which it is cuſtomary to ſuffer, without paying them any regard. Charles XI. how-

however, who could play the hypocrite extremely well, when he was not hurried away by the violence of his paſſion, gently ſtruck Patkul on the ſhoulder: "You have ſpoke for your country, (ſaid he) like a brave man, and I eſteem you for it; go on." Notwithſtanding, in a few days after, he cauſed him to be declared guilty of high treaſon, and as ſuch to be condemned to death. Patkul, who had hid himſelf, made his eſcape, and carried his reſentment with him to Poland, where he was afterwards admitted into the preſence of king Auguſtus. Charles XI. was now dead; but Patkul's ſentence was ſtill in force, and his indignation ſtill unabated. He repreſented to his Poliſh majeſty the facility of conquering Livonia, the people of which were mad with deſpair, and ready to throw off the Swediſh yoke; while the king was a child, and unable to make any reſiſtance. Theſe repreſentations were well received by a prince, who already flattered himſelf with the agreeable hopes of this important conqueſt. Auguſtus had engaged at his coronation to exert his moſt vigorous efforts, in order to recover the provinces which Poland had loſt; and he imagined, that, by making an irruption into Livonia, he ſhould at once pleaſe the people and eſtabliſh his own power; in both which particulars, however promiſing of ſucceſs, he at laſt found himſelf fatally diſappointed. Every thing was ſoon got ready for a ſudden invaſion, which he reſolved to make without having recourſe to the vain formalities of declarations of war and manifeſtoes. The ſtorm thickened at the ſame time on the ſide of Muſcovy. The monarch who governed that kingdom merits the attention of poſterity.

Peter Alexiowitz, czar of Ruſſia, had already made himſelf formidable by the battle he had gained over the Turks in 1697, and by the reduction of Aſoph, which opened to him the dominion of the Black Sea. But it was by actions ſtill more glorious than even his victories, that he aſpired to the name of Great. Muſcovy, or Ruſſia, comprehends the northern parts of Aſia and of Europe, and from the frontiers of China extends, for the ſpace of fifteen hundred leagues, to the borders of Poland and Sweden. This immenſe country, however, was hardly known to Europe, before the time of the czar Peter. The Muſcovites were leſs civilized than the Mexicans, when diſcovered by Cortez: born the ſlaves of maſters as barbarous as themſelves, they were ſunk into a ſtate of the moſt profound ignorance, into a total want of all the arts and ſciences, and into ſuch an inſenſibility of that want, as effectually ſuppreſſed every exertion of induſtry. An ancient law, which they held to be ſacred, forbad them, under pain of death, to leave their native country without permiſſion of their patriarch. This law, made with a view to preclude them from all opportunities of becoming ſenſible of their ſlavery, was very acceptable to a people, who, in the depth of their miſery and ignorance, diſdained all commerce with foreign nations.

The æra of the Muſcovites began at the creation of the world: they reckoned up 7207 years to the beginning of the laſt century, without being able to aſſign any reaſon for this computation. The firſt day of their year anſwered to the thirteenth of our month of November. The reaſon *they alledge* for this regulation is, that it is probable

table that God created the world in autumn, the ſeaſon when the fruits of the earth are in their full maturity. Thus, the only appearances of knowledge which they had were founded upon groſs errors; not one of them ever dreamed that the autumn of Muſcovy might poſſibly be the ſpring of another country, ſituated in an oppoſite climate. Nor is it long ſince the people at Moſcow were going to burn the ſecretary of a Perſian ambaſſador, who had foretold an eclipſe of the ſun. They did not ſo much as know the uſe of figures; but in all their computations made uſe of little beads ſtrung upon braſs-wires. They had no other manner of reckoning in their compting-houſes, not even in the treaſury of the czar.

Their religion was, and ſtill is, that of the Greek church, intermixed with many ſuperſtitious rites, to which they are the more ſtrongly attached, in proportion as they are the more ridiculous, and their burden the more intolerable. Few Muſcovites would venture to eat a pigeon, becauſe the Holy Ghoſt is painted in the form of a dove. They regularly obſerved four lents in the year; and during thoſe times of abſtinence, they never preſumed to eat either eggs or milk. God and St. Nicholas were the objects of their worſhip, and next to them the czar and the patriarch. The authority of the laſt was as unbounded as the people's ignorance. He pronounced ſentences of death, and inflicted the moſt cruel puniſhments, without any poſſibility of an appeal from his tribunal. Twice a-year he made a ſolemn proceſſion on horſe-back, attended by all his clergy in order. The czar on foot held the bridle of his horſe, and the people proſtrated themſelves before him in the ſtreets, as the Tartars do before their grand

grand lama. Confeſſion was in uſe among them; but it was only in caſes of the greateſt crimes. In theſe abſolution was neceſſary, but not repentance. They thought themſelves pure in the ſight of God, as ſoon as they received the benediction of their papas. Thus they paſſed, without remorſe, from confeſſion to theft and murder; and what among other Chriſtians is a reſtraint from vice, with them was an encouragement to wickedneſs. On a faſt-day, they would not even venture to drink milk; but on a feſtival, maſters of families, prieſts, married women and maids, would make no ſcruple to intoxicate themſelves with brandy. However, there were religious diſputes among them as well as in other countries; but their greateſt controverſy was, whether laymen ſhould make the ſign of the croſs with two fingers or with three. One Jacob Nurſoff, in the preceding reign, had raiſed a ſedition in Aſtracan about this very quarrel. There were even ſome fanatics among them, as there are in thoſe civilized nations where every one is a theologian; and Peter, who always carried juſtice to the extreme of cruelty, cauſed ſome of theſe wretched creatures, who were called Voſko-jeſuits, to be committed to the flames.

The czar, in his vaſt dominions, had many other ſubjects who were not Chriſtians. The Tartars, inhabiting the weſtern coaſts of the Caſpian Sea and the Palus Mæotis, were Mahometans; the Siberians, the Oſtiacks, and the Samoides, who lie towards the Frozen Sea, were ſavages, ſome of whom were idolaters, and others had not the leaſt knowledge of a God; and yet the Swedes *who were ſent priſoners* among them, were better

pleaſed

pleaſed with their manners than with thoſe of the ancient Muſcovites.

Peter Alexiowitz had received an education that tended ſtill more to encreaſe the barbarity of this part of the world. His natural diſpoſition led him to careſs ſtrangers, before he knew what advantages he might derive from their acquaintance. Le Fort, as hath been already obſerved, was the firſt inſtrument he employed to change the face of affairs in Muſcovy. His mighty genius, which a barbarous education had hitherto checked but not deſtroyed, broke forth all of a ſudden. He reſolved to be a man, to command men, and to create a new nation. Many princes before him had renounced crowns, wearied out with the intolerable load of public affairs; but no man had ever diveſted himſelf of the royal character, in order to learn the art of governing better: this was a ſtretch of heroiſm which was reſerved for Peter the Great alone.

He left Muſcovy in 1698, having reigned as yet but two years, and went to Holland, diſguiſed under a common name, as if he had been a menial ſervant of that ſame Mr. le Fort, whom he ſent in quality of ambaſſador-extraordinary to the ſtates-general. As ſoon as he arrived at Amſterdam, he enrolled his name among the ſhipwrights of the admiralty of the Indies, and wrought in the yard like the other mechanics. At his leiſure hours he learned ſuch parts of the mathematics as are uſeful to a prince, fortification, navigation, and the art of drawing plans. He went into the workmen's ſhops, and examined all their manufactures: nothing could eſcape his obſervation. From thence he paſſed over into *England*, where having perfected himſelf in the

art

art of ſhip-building, he returned to Holland, carefully obſerving every thing that might turn to the advantage of his country. At laſt, after two years of travel and labour, to which no man but himſelf would have willingly ſubmitted, he again made his appearance in Muſcovy, with all the arts of Europe in his train. Artiſts of every kind followed him in abundance. Then were ſeen, for the firſt time, large Ruſſian ſhips in the Baltick, and on the Black Sea and the Ocean. Stately buildings, of a regular architecture, were raiſed among the Ruſſian huts. He founded colleges, academies, printing-houſes, and libraries. The cities were brought under a regular police. The cloaths and cuſtoms of the people were gradually changed, though not without ſome difficulty; and the Muſcovites learned by degrees the true nature of a ſocial ſtate. Even their ſuperſtitious rites were aboliſhed; the dignity of the patriarch was ſuppreſſed; and the czar declared himſelf the head of the church. This laſt enterprize, which would have coſt a prince leſs abſolute than Peter both his throne and his life, ſucceeded almoſt without oppoſition, and inſured to him the ſucceſs of all his other innovations.

After having humbled an ignorant and a barbarous clergy, he ventured to make a trial of inſtructing them, though by that means he ran the riſque of rendering them formidable; but he was too conſcious of his own power to entertain any apprehenſion from that quarter. He cauſed philoſophy and theology to be taught in the few monaſteries that ſtill remained. 'True it is, this theology ſtill ſavours of that barbarous period in *which Peter* civilized his people. A gentleman *of undoubted* veracity aſſured me, that he was preſent

preſent at a public diſputation, where the point of controverſy was, whether the practice of ſmoking tobacco was a ſin? The reſpondent alledged, that it was lawful to get drunk with brandy, but not to ſmoke, becauſe the holy ſcripture ſaith, "That that which proceedeth out of the mouth defileth a man, and that which entereth into it doth not defile him."

The monks were not ſatisfied with this reformation. Hardly had the czar erected his printing-houſes, when theſe pious drones made uſe of them to publiſh declamations againſt their ſovereign. One of them affirmed in print that Peter was Antichriſt; and his arguments were, that he deprived the living of their beards, and allowed the dead to be diſſected in his academy. But another monk, who had a-mind to make his fortune, refuted this book, and proved that Peter could not be Antichriſt, becauſe the number 666 was not to be found in his name. The libeller was broke upon the wheel, and the author of the refutation was made biſhop of Rezan.

The reformer of Muſcovy enacted a very wholeſome law, the want of which reflects diſgrace upon many civilized nations. By this law, no man engaged in the ſervice of the ſtate, no citizen eſtabliſhed in trade, and eſpecially no minor, was allowed to retire into a convent.

Peter knew of what infinite conſequence it was to prevent uſeful ſubjects from conſecrating themſelves to idleneſs, and to hinder young people from diſpoſing of their liberty, at an age when they are incapable of diſpoſing of the leaſt part of their patrimony. This law, however, ſo plainly calculated for the general intereſt of mankind, is daily eluded

eluded by the induſtry of the monks; as if they, forſooth, were gainers by peopling their convents at the expence of their country.

The czar not only ſubjected the church to the ſtate, after the example of the Turkiſh emperors, but, what was a more maſterly ſtroke of policy, he diſſolved a militia of much the ſame nature with that of the janiſſaries: and what the ſultans had attempted in vain, he accompliſhed in a ſhort time: he diſbanded the Ruſſian janiſſaries, who were called Strelits, and who kept the czars in ſubjection. Theſe troops, more formidable to their maſters than to their neighbours, conſiſted of about thirty thouſand foot, one half of which remained at Moſcow, while the other was ſtationed upon the frontiers. The pay of a ſtrelits was no more than four roubles a-year; but this deficiency was amply compenſated by privileges and extortions. Peter at firſt formed a company of foreigners, among whom he enrolled his own name, and did not think it below him to begin the ſervice in the character of a drummer, and to perform the duties of that mean office; ſo much did the nation ſtand in need of examples! By degrees he became an officer. He gradually raiſed new regiments; and, at laſt, finding himſelf maſter of a well diſciplined army, he broke the ſtrelits, who durſt not diſobey.

The cavalry were nearly the ſame with that of Poland, or France, when this laſt kingdom was no more than an aſſemblage of fiefs. The Ruſſian gentlemen mounted horſe at their own expence, and fought without diſcipline, and ſometimes without any other arms than a ſabre or a bow, incapable of obeying, and conſequently of *conquering*.

Peter

. Peter the Great taught them to obey, both by the example he ſet them, and by the puniſhments he inflicted; for he ſerved in the quality of a ſoldier and ſubaltern officer, and as czar he ſeverely puniſhed the boyards, that is, the gentlemen, who pretended that it was the priviſege of their order not to ſerve but by their own conſent. He eſtabliſhed a regular body to ſerve the artillery, and took five hundred bells from the churches to found cannon. In the year 1714, he had thirteen thouſand braſs cannon. He likewiſe formed ſome troops of dragoons, a kind of militia very ſuitable to the genius of the Muſcovites, and to the ſize of their horſes, which are ſmall. In 1738 the Ruſſians had thirty regiments of dragoons, conſiſting of a thouſand men each, and well accoutered.

He likewiſe eſtabliſhed the Ruſſian huſſars; and had even a ſchool of engineers, in a country where, before his time, no one underſtood the elements of geometry.

He was himſelf a good engineer; but his chief excellence lay in his knowledge of naval affairs: he was an able ſea-captain, a ſkilful pilot, a good ſailor, an expert ſhip-wright, and his knowledge of theſe arts was the more meritorious, as he was born with a great dread of the water. In his youth he could not paſs over a bridge without trembling: on all theſe occaſions he cauſed the wooden windows of his coach to be ſhut; but of this conſtitutional weakneſs he ſoon got the better by his courage and reſolution.

He cauſed a beautiful harbour to be built at the mouth of the Tanais, near Aſoph, in which he propoſed to keep a number of gallies; and ſome time after, thinking that theſe veſſels, ſo long, light,

light, and flat, would probably ſucceed in the Baltick, he had upwards of three hundred of them built at his favourite city of Peterſburg. He ſhewed his ſubjects the method of building ſhips with fir only, and taught them the art of navigation. He had even learned ſurgery, and, in a caſe of neceſſity, has been known to tap a dropſical perſon. He was well verſed in mechanics, and inſtructed the artiſts.

Indeed the revenue of the czar, when compared to the immenſe extent of his dominions, was very inconſiderable. It never amounted to four and twenty millions of our money, reckoning the mark at about fifty livres, as we do to-day, though perhaps we may do otherwiſe to-morrow. But a man may always be accounted rich, who has it in his power to accompliſh great undertakings. It is not the ſcarcity of money that weakens a ſtate; it is the want of hands, and of men of abilities.

Ruſſia, notwithſtanding the women are fruitful and the men robuſt, is far from being populous. Peter himſelf, in civilizing his dominions, unhappily contributed to their depopulation. Frequent levies in his wars, which were long unſucceſsful; nations tranſported from the coaſts of the Caſpian Sea to thoſe of the Baltick, deſtroyed by fatigue, or cut off by diſeaſes; three fourths of the Muſcovite children dying of the ſmall-pox, which is more dangerous in thoſe climates than in any other; in a word, the melancholy effects of a government ſavage for a long time, and even barbarous in its policy; to all theſe cauſes it is owing, that in this country, comprehending ſo great a part of the continent, there are ſtill vaſt deſerts. Ruſſia, at preſent, is ſuppoſed to contain five hundred *thouſand* families of gentlemen; two hundred

dred thouſand lawyers; ſomething more than five millions of citizens and peaſants, who pay a ſort of tax; ſix hundred thouſand men who live in the provinces conquered from the Swedes; the Coſſacks in the Ukraine, and the Tartars that are ſubject to Muſcovy, do not exceed two millions; in fine, it appears that in this immenſe country, there are not above fourteen millions of men, that is, a little more than two thirds of the inhabitants of France.

While Peter was employed in changing the laws, the manners, the militia, and the very face of his country, he likewiſe reſolved to encreaſe his greatneſs by encouraging commerce, which at once conſtitutes the riches of a particular ſtate, and contributes to the intereſt of the world in general. He reſolved to make Ruſſia the center of trade between Aſia and Europe. He determined to join the Duna, the Volga, and the Tanais, by canals, of which he drew the plans; and thus to open a new paſſage from the Baltick to the Euxine and Caſpian Seas, and from theſe ſeas to the Northern Ocean.

The port of Archangel, frozen up for nine months in the year, and which could not be entered without making a long and dangerous circuit, he did not think ſufficiently commodious. From the year 1700, he had formed a deſign of building a port upon the Baltic ſea, that ſhould become the magazine of the North, and of raiſing a city that ſhould prove the capital of his empire.

He was already attempting to find out a north-eaſt paſſage to China; and the manufactures of Pekin and Paris were deſigned to embelliſh his new city.

A road 754 verſts long, running through marſhes that were to be drained, led from Moſcow to his new city. Moſt of theſe projects were executed by his own hands; and the two empreſſes, who have ſucceſſively followed him, have even improved upon his ſchemes, when they were practicable, and abandoned none but ſuch as it was impoſſible to accompliſh.

He was always travelling up and down his dominions, as much as his wars would allow him; but he travelled like a legiſlator and natural philoſopher, examining nature every where, endeavouring to correct or perfect her; ſounding with his own hands the depth of ſeas and rivers; repairing ſluices, viſiting docks, cauſing mines to be ſearched for, aſſaying metals, ordering accurate plans to be drawn, in the execution of which he himſelf aſſiſted.

He built upon a very wild and uncultivated ſpot, the imperial city of Peterſburg, which now contains ſixty thouſand houſes, and is the reſidence of a ſplendid court, where all the refined pleaſures are known and enjoyed. He built the harbour of Cronſtad, on the Neva, and St. Croix, on the frontiers of Perſia; erected forts on the Ukraine, and in Siberia; eſtabliſhed offices of admiralty at Archangel, Peterſburg, Aſtracan, and Azoph; founded arſenals, and built and endowed hoſpitals. All his own houſes were mean, and executed in a bad taſte; but he ſpared no expences in rendering the public buildings grand and magnificent.

The ſciences, which in other countries have been the ſlow product of ſo many ages, were, by his care and induſtry, imported into Ruſſia in *full perfection*. He eſtabliſhed an academy on the

the plan of the famous ſocieties of Paris and London. The Deliſles, the Bulfingers, the Hermanns's, the Bernouilles, and the celebrated Wolf, a man who excelled in every branch of philoſophy, were all invited and brought to Peterſburg at a great expence. This academy ſtill ſubſiſts; and the Muſcovites, at length, have philoſophers of their own nation.

He obliged the young nobility to travel for improvement, and to bring back into Ruſſia the politeneſs of foreign countries; and I have ſeen ſome young Ruſſians who were men of genius and of knowledge. Thus it was that a ſingle man changed the face of the greateſt empire in the univerſe. It is however a ſhocking reflection, that this reformer of mankind ſhould have been deficient in that firſt of all virtues, the virtue of humanity. Brutality in his pleaſures, ferocity in his manners, and cruelty in his puniſhments, ſullied the luſtre of ſo many virtues. He civilized his ſubjects, and yet himſelf remained a barbarian. He would ſometimes, with his own hands, execute ſentences of death upon the unhappy criminals; and, in the midſt of a revel, would ſhew his dexterity in cutting off heads. There are princes in Africa, who, with their own hands, ſhed the blood of their ſubjects; but theſe kings are always deteſted as barbarians. The death of a ſon, whom he ought to have corrected, or at moſt diſinherited, would render the memory of Peter the object of univerſal hatred, were it not that the great and many bleſſings he beſtowed upon his ſubjects, were almoſt ſufficient to excuſe his cruelty to his own offſpring.

Such was the czar Peter; and his great projects were little more than in embrio when he joined the kings of Poland and Denmark againſt a child whom they all deſpiſed. The founder of the Ruſſian empire was ambitious of being a conqueror; and ſuch he thought he might eaſily become by the proſecution of a war, which, being entered into with ſo much prudence, could not fail, he imagined, of proving advantageous to his ſubjects: the art of war was a new art, which it was neceſſary to teach his people.

Beſides, he wanted a port on the eaſt ſide of the Baltic, to facilitate the execution of all his ſchemes. He wanted the province of Ingria, which lies to the north-eaſt of Livonia. The Swedes were in poſſeſſion of it, and from them he reſolved to take it by force. His predeceſſors had had claims upon Ingria, Eſtonia, and Livonia; and the preſent ſeemed a favourable opportunity for reviving theſe claims, which had lain buried for a hundred years, and had been cancelled by the ſanction of treaties. He therefore made a league with the king of Poland, to wreſt from young Charles XII. all the territories that are bounded by the gulph of Finland, the Baltic Sea, Poland, and Muſcovy.

THE

HISTORY

OF

CHARLES XII.

KING of SWEDEN.

BOOK II.

THE CONTENTS.

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IN this manner did three powerful ſovereigns menace the infancy of Charles XII. The news of theſe preparations ſtruck the Swedes with conſternation, and alarmed the council. All the great generals were now dead; and every thing was to be feared under the reign of a young king, who had hitherto given no very favourable impreſſions of his character. He hardly ever aſ-

ſiſted at the council; and when he did, it was only to ſit croſs-legged on the table, abſent, inattentive, and ſeemingly regardleſs of every thing that paſſed.

The council happened to hold a deliberation in his preſence concerning the dangerous ſituation of affairs; ſome of the members propoſed to avert the ſtorm by negociations, when all on a ſudden Charles roſe with an air of gravity and aſſurance, like a man of ſuperior conſequence who has choſen his ſide: "Gentlemen, ſaid he, I am reſolved never to begin an unjuſt war, nor ever to finiſh a juſt one but by the deſtruction of my enemies. My reſolution is fixed. I will attack the firſt that ſhall declare againſt me; and, after having conquered him, I hope I ſhall be able to ſtrike terror into the reſt." All the old counſellors were aſtoniſhed at this declaration, and looked at one another without daring to reply. Agreeably ſurpriſed to find their king poſſeſſed of ſuch noble ſentiments, and aſhamed to be leſs ſanguine in their expectations than him, they received his orders for the war with admiration.

They were ſtill more ſurpriſed when they ſaw him at once bid adieu to the moſt innocent amuſements of youth. The moment he began to make preparations for the war, he entered on a new courſe of life, from which he never afterwards deviated in one ſingle inſtance. Full of the idea of Alexander and Cæſar, he propoſed to imitate thoſe two conquerors in every thing but their vices. No longer did he indulge himſelf in magnificence, ſports, and recreations: he reduced his table to the moſt rigid frugality. He had formerly been fond of gaiety and dreſs; but from

that time he was never clad otherwiſe than a common ſoldier. He was ſuppoſed to have entertained a paſſion for a lady of his court: whether there was any foundation for this ſuppoſition does not appear; certain it is, he ever after renounced all commerce with women, not only for fear of being governed by them, but likewiſe to ſet an example of continence to his ſoldiers, whom he reſolved to confine within the ſtricteſt diſcipline; perhaps too from the vanity of being thought the only king that could conquer a paſſion ſo difficult to be overcome. He likewiſe determined to abſtain from wine during the reſt of his life. Some people have told me, that his only reaſon for taking this reſolution was to ſubdue his vicious inclinations in every thing, and to add one virtue more to his former ſtock; but the greater number have aſſured me, that it was to puniſh himſelf for a riot he had committed, and an affront he had offered to a lady at table, even in preſence of the queen-mother. If that be true, this condemnation of his own conduct, and this abſtinence which he impoſed upon himſelf during the remainder of his life, is a ſpecies of heroiſm no leſs worthy of admiration *.

He began by aſſuring the duke of Holſtein, his brother-in-law, of a ſpeedy aſſiſtance. Eight thouſand men were immediately ſent into Pomerania, a province bordering upon Holſtein, in order to enable the duke to make head againſt the Danes. The duke indeed had need of them. His dominions were already laid waſte, the caſtle of Gottorp taken, and the city of Tonningen

* If we may judge from the whole tenour of his life and character, he had in fact no tenderneſs in his nature.

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preſſed by an obſtinate ſiege, to which the king of Denmark was come in perſon, in order to enjoy a conqueſt, which he held to be certain. This ſpark began to throw the empire into a flame. On the one ſide the Saxon troops of the king of Poland, thoſe of Brandenburg, Wolfenbuttle, and Heſſe Caſſel, advanced to join the Danes. On the other, the king of Sweden's eight thouſand men, the troops of Hanover and Zell, and three Dutch regiments, came to the aſſiſtance of the duke. While the little country of Holſtein was thus the theatre of war, two ſquadrons, the one from England, and the other from Holland, appeared in the Baltic. Theſe two ſtates were guarantees of the treaty of Altena, which the Danes had broke, and were eager to aſſiſt the duke of Holſtein, becauſe it was for the intereſt of their trade to check the growing power of the king of Denmark. They knew, that ſhould he once become maſter of the Sound, he would impoſe the moſt rigorous laws upon the commercial nations, as ſoon as he ſhould be able to do it with impunity. This conſideration has long induced the Engliſh and the Dutch to maintain, as much as they can, a balance of power between the princes of the North. They joined the young king of Sweden, who ſeemed to be in danger of being cruſhed by ſuch a powerful combination of enemies, and aſſiſted him for the very ſame reaſon that the others attacked him; namely, becauſe they thought him incapable of defending himſelf.

He was taking the diverſion of boar-hunting when he received the news of the Saxons having invaded Livonia. This paſtime he enjoyed in a manner equally new and dangerous. No other

weapons

weapons were uſed but ſharp-pointed ſticks, with which the hunters defended themſelves behind a cord ſtretched between two trees. A boar of a huge ſize came ſtraight againſt the king, who, after a long ſtruggle, by the help of the cord and ſtick, levelled him with the ground. It muſt be acknowledged, that in reading of ſuch adventures as theſe, in conſidering the ſurpriſing ſtrength of king Auguſtus, and reviewing the travels of the czar, we are almoſt tempted to think that we live in the times of Hercules and Theſeus.

Charles ſet out for his firſt campaign on the eighth day of May, new ſtile, in the year 1700, and left Stockholm, whither he never returned. An innumerable company of people attended him to the port of Carelſcroon, offering up their prayers for his ſafety, bedewing the ground with their tears, and expreſſing their admiration of his virtue. Before he left Sweden, he eſtabliſhed at Stockholm a council of defence, compoſed of ſeveral ſenators, who were to take care of whatever concerned the navy, the army, and the fortifications of the country. The body of the ſenate were proviſionally to regulate every thing beſides, in the interior government of the kingdom. Having thus ſettled the adminiſtration of public affairs, and freed his mind from every other care, he devoted himſelf intirely to war. His fleet conſiſted of three and forty veſſels: that in which he ſailed, named the King Charles, and the largeſt that had ever been ſeen, was a ſhip of an hundred and twenty guns. Count Piper, his firſt miniſter, general Renſchild, and the count de Guiſcard, the French ambaſſador in Sweden, embarked along with him. He joined the ſquadrons of the

allies. The Daniſh fleet declined the combat, and gave the three combined fleets an opportunity of approaching ſo near to Copenhagen, as to throw ſome bombs into it.

Certain it is, it was the king himſelf that firſt propoſed to general Renſchild to make a deſcent, and to beſiege Copehagen by land, while it ſhould be blocked up by ſea. Renſchild was ſurpriſed to receive a propoſal that diſcovered as much prudence as courage, from ſuch a young and unexperienced prince. Every thing was ſoon got ready for the deſcent. Orders were given for the embarkation of five thouſand men, who lay upon the coaſt of Sweden, and who were joined to the troops they had on board. The king quitted his large ſhip and went into a frigate, and they then began to diſpatch towards the ſhore three hundred grenadiers in ſmall ſhallops. Among the ſhallops were ſome flat-bottomed boats that carried the faſcines, the chevaux de frize, and the inſtruments of the pioneers. Five hundred choſen men followed in other ſhallops. Laſt of all came the king's men of war, with two Engliſh and two Dutch frigates, which were to favour the landing of the troops under cover of their cannon.

Copenhagen, the capital of Denmark, is ſituated in the iſle of Zealand, in the midſt of a beautiful plain, having the Sound on the north-eaſt, and on the eaſt the Baltic, where the king of Sweden then lay. At the unexpected movement of the veſſels, which threatned a deſcent, the inhabitants were ſtruck with conſternation. Alarmed at the inactivity of their own fleet, and the motion of the Swediſh ſhips, they looked round with terror, to obſerve where the ſtorm would fall. Charles's fleet ſtopped over againſt Humblebeck, within

ſeven

ſeven miles of Copenhagen. In that place the Danes immediately drew up their cavalry. Their foot were poſted behind thick entrenchments; and what artillery they could bring thither, was pointed againſt the Swedes.

The king then quitted his frigate, to throw himſelf into the firſt ſhallop, at the head of his guards. The French ambaſſador being always at his ſide, "Sir, ſaid the king to him, in Latin, (for he would never ſpeak French,) you have no quarrel with the Danes, you need go no farther, if you pleaſe." "Sir, anſwered the count de Guiſcard, in French, the king my maſter hath ordered me to attend your majeſty. I hope you will not this day baniſh me from your court, which never before appeared ſo ſplendid." So ſaying, he gave his hand to the king, who leaped into the ſhallop, whither he was followed by count Piper and the ambaſſador. They advanced under ſhelter of the cannon of the ſhips that favoured the landing. The ſmall boats were ſtill about three hundred paces from the ſhore. Charles, impatient to land, jumped into the ſea, ſword in hand, the water reaching above his waiſt. His miniſters, the French ambaſſador, the officers and ſoldiers, immediately followed his example, and marched up to the ſhore, amidſt a ſhower of muſket-ſhot from the enemy. The king, who had never in his life before heard a diſcharge of muſkets loaded with ball, aſked major Stuart, who ſtood next him, what meant that whiſtling which he heard. "It is the noiſe of the muſket balls, which they fire upon you," replied the major. "Very well, ſays the king, henceforward that ſhall be my muſic." At that inſtant the major

received a ſhot in his ſhoulder, and a lieutenant on the other ſide of him fell dead at his feet.

It is uſual for troops that are attacked in their trenches to be beat; becauſe the aſſailants have always an impetuoſity of courage, which the defenders cannot have; and beſides, to wait for the enemy in our lines is frequently a confeſſion of our own weakneſs, and of their ſuperiority. The Daniſh horſe and foot took to their heels, after a feeble reſiſtance. The king having become maſter of their intrenchments, fell upon his knees to return thanks to God for the firſt ſucceſs of his arms. He forthwith cauſed redoubts to be raiſed towards the town, and himſelf marked out the place for the encampment. Mean while he ſent back his veſſels to Schonen, a port of Sweden bordering upon Copenhagen, for a reinforcement of nine thouſand men. Every thing conſpired to favour the ardour of Charles's courage. The nine thouſand men were upon the ſhore ready to embark, and next day a favourable wind brought them ſafe to the place of their deſtination.

All this paſſed within ſight of the Daniſh fleet, who durſt not venture to advance. Copenhagen, ſtruck with terror, immediately ſent deputies to the king, beſeeching him not to bombard the city. He received them on horſeback, at the head of his regiment of guards; and the deputies fell upon their knees before him. He exacted from the citizens four hundred thouſand rix-dollars, commanding them, at the ſame time, to ſupply his camp with all kind of proviſions, for which he aſſured them they ſhould be honeſtly paid. They brought the proviſions, becauſe they durſt not diſobey; but they little expected that conquerors would condeſcend to pay for them; and

and thoſe who brought them were ſurpriſed to find that they were generouſly and inſtantly paid, even by the meaneſt ſoldier in the army. There had long prevailed among the Swediſh troops a ſtrict diſcipline, which had greatly contributed to the ſucceſs of their arms; and the king rendered it ſtill more rigid. No ſoldier durſt refuſe to pay for what he had bought, ſtill leſs to go a-plundering, nor even ſo much as to go out of the camp. What is more, he would not allow his troops, after a victory, to ſtrip the bodies of the dead, until they had obtained his permiſſion; and he eaſily brought them to the obſervance of this injunction. Prayers were regularly ſaid in his camp twice a day; at ſeven in the morning and four in the afternoon; and he never failed to attend them himſelf, in order to give his ſoldiers an example of piety as well as of valour. His camp, which was better regulated than Copenhagen, had every thing in abundance; the peaſants chuſing much rather to ſell their proviſions to their enemies the Swedes, than to the Danes, who did not pay them ſo well. Even the citizens were more than once obliged to come to the Swediſh camp to purchaſe thoſe proviſions which they could not find in their own markets.

The king of Denmark was then in Holſtein, whither he ſeemed to have gone for no other purpoſe than to raiſe the ſiege of Tonningen. He ſaw the Baltic covered with the enemies ſhips, and a young conqueror alreaſty maſter of Zealand, and juſt upon the point of taking poſſeſſion of his capital. He cauſed an edict to be publiſhed throughout all his dominions, promiſing liberty to every one that ſhould take up arms againſt the Swedes. This declaration was of great

weight in a country which was formerly free, but where all the peaſants, and even many of the citizens, are now-a-days ſlaves. Charles ſent word to the king of Denmark, that his only intention in making war was to oblige him to come to a peace; and that he muſt either reſolve to do juſtice to the duke of Holſtein, or ſee Copenhagen levelled with the ground, and his dominions laid waſte with fire and ſword. The Dane was too happy in having to do with a conqueror who valued himſelf on his regard to juſtice. A congreſs was held in the town of Travendal, which lies on the frontiers of Holſtein. The king of Sweden would not allow the negociations to be protracted by the arts of miniſters; but determined to have the treaty finiſhed with the ſame rapidity with which he had made his deſcent upon Zealand. In effect, a peace was concluded, on the fifth of Auguſt, to the advantage of the duke of Holſtein, who was indemnified for all the expences of the war, and delivered from oppreſſion. The king of Sweden, fully ſatisfied with having ſuccoured his ally, and humbled his enemy, would accept of nothing for himſelf. Thus Charles XII. at eighteen years of age, began and finiſhed this war in leſs than ſix weeks.

Exactly at the ſame time, the king of Poland inveſted Riga, the capital of Livonia; and the czar was advancing on the eaſt, at the head of near an hundred thouſand men. Riga was defended by the old count d'Alberg, a Swediſh general, who, at the age of eighty, joined all the fire of youth to the experience of ſixty campaigns. Count Flemming, afterwards miniſter of Poland, a man of diſtinguiſhed abilities as well in the field as the cabinet, and Patkul the Livonian, puſhed

puſhed the ſiege with great vigour, under the direction of the king; but notwithſtanding ſeveral advantages which the beſiegers had gained, the experience of old count d'Alberg baffled all their efforts, and the king of Poland began to deſpair of being able to take the town. At laſt he laid hold of an honourable pretext for raiſing the ſiege. Riga was full of merchants goods belonging to the Dutch. The ſtates-general ordered their ambaſſador at the court of Auguſtus, to repreſent the matter to his majeſty. The king of Poland did not long reſiſt their importunities, and agreed to raiſe the ſiege, rather than occaſion the leaſt damage to his allies, who were not greatly ſurpriſed at this ſtretch of complaiſance, to the real cauſe of which they were no ſtrangers.

The only thing that Charles had now to do, towards the finiſhing of his firſt campaign, was to march againſt his rival in glory, Peter Alexowitz. He was the more exaſperated againſt him, as there were ſtill at Stockholm three Muſcovite ambaſſadors, who had lately ſworn to the renewal of an inviolable peace. Poſſeſſed, as he was himſelf of the moſt incorruptible integrity, he could not conceive how a legiſlator, like the czar, ſhould make a jeſt of what ought to be held ſo ſacred. The young prince, whoſe ſenſe of honour was extremely refined, never imagined that there could be one ſyſtem of morality for kings, and another for private perſons. The emperor of Muſcovy had juſt publiſhed a manifeſto, which he had much better have ſuppreſſed. He there alledged, as the reaſon of the war, the little reſpect that had been ſhewn him when he went incognito to Riga, and the extravagant prices

his ambaſſadors had been obliged to pay for proviſions. Such were the mighty injuries for which he ravaged Ingria, with eighty thouſand men!

At the head of this great army he appeared before Narva, on the firſt of October, a ſeaſon more ſevere in that climate than the month of January is at Paris. The czar, who in ſuch weather would ſometimes ride poſt for four hundred leagues, to ſee a mine or a canal, was not more ſparing of his troops than of himſelf. He knew, moreover, that the Swedes, ever ſince the time of Guſtavus Adolphus, could make war in the depth of winter as well as in ſummer; and he wanted to accuſtom the Ruſſians likewiſe to forget all diſtinction of ſeaſons, and to render them, one day, equal to the Swedes. Thus, in a time when froſt and ſnow compel other nations in more temperate climates to agree to a ſuſpenſion of arms, the czar Peter beſieged Narva, within thirty degrees of the pole, and Charles XII. advanced to its relief. The czar was no ſooner arrived before the place, than he immediately put in practice what he had learned in his travels. He marked out his camp, fortified it on all ſides, raiſed redoubts at certain diſtances, and opened the trenches himſelf. He had given the command of his troops to the duke de Croix, a German, and an able general, but who at that time was little aſſiſted by the Ruſſian officers. As for himſelf, he had no other rank in the army than that of a private lieutenant He thereby gave an example of military obedience to his nobility, hitherto unacquainted with diſcipline, and accuſtomed to march at the head of ill-armed ſlaves, without experience and without order. There

was

was nothing ſtrange in ſeeing him who had turned carpenter at Amſterdam, in order to procure himſelf fleets, ſerve as lieutenant at Narva, to teach his ſubjects the art of war.

The Muſcovites are ſtrong and indefatigable, and perhaps as courageous as the Swedes; but it requires time and diſcipline to render troops warlike and invincible. The only regiments that could be depended upon were commanded by ſome German officers; but their number was very inconſiderable. The reſt were barbarians forced from their foreſts, and covered with the ſkins of wild beaſts; ſome armed with arrows, and others with clubs. Few of them had fuſees; none of them had ever ſeen a regular ſiege; and there was not one good cannoneer in the whole army. An hundred and fifty cannon, which one would have thought muſt have ſoon reduced the little town of Narva to aſhes, were hardly able to make a breach, while the artillery of the city mowed down at every diſcharge whole ranks of the enemy in their trenches. Narva was almoſt without fortifications: the baron de Hoorn, who commanded there, had not a thouſand regular troops; and yet this immenſe army could not reduce it in ten weeks.

It was now the fifth of November, when the czar learned that the king of Sweden had croſſed the ſea with two hundred tranſports, and was advancing to the relief of Narva. The Swedes were not above twenty thouſand ſtrong. The czar had no advantage but that of numbers. Far therefore from deſpiſing his enemy, he employed every art in order to cruſh him. Not content with eighty thouſand men, he reſolved to oppoſe to him another army ſtill, and to check

his progreſs at every ſtep. He had already given orders for the march of about thirty thouſand men, who were advancing from Pleſkow with great expedition. He then took a ſtep that would have rendered him contemptible, could a legiſlator who had performed ſuch great and glorious actions incur that imputation. He left his camp, where his preſence was neceſſary, to go in queſt of this new army, which might have arrived well enough without him, and ſeemed by this conduct to betray his fear of engaging in his entrenchments a young and unexperienced prince who might come to attack him.

Be that as it will, he reſolved to ſhut up Charles XII. between two armies. Nor was this all: a detachment of thirty thouſand men from the camp before Narva were poſted at a league's diſtance from the city, directly in the king of Sweden's road: twenty thouſand ſtrelits were placed farther off, upon the ſame road; and five thouſand others compoſed an advanced guard; and he muſt neceſſarily force his way through all theſe troops before he could reach the camp, which was fortified with a rampart and double foſſé. The king of Sweden had landed at Pernaw, in the gulph of Riga, with about ſixteen thouſand foot, and little more than four thouſand horſe. From Pernaw he made a flying march to Revel, followed by all his cavalry, and only by four thouſand foot. He always marched in the van of his army, without waiting for the rear. He ſoon found himſelf, with his eight thouſand men only, before the firſt poſts of the enemy. He immediately reſolved, without the leaſt heſitation, to attack them, one after another, before they could poſſibly learn with what a ſmall number they had

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to engage. The Muſcovites ſeeing the Swedes come upon them, imagined they had a whole army to encounter. The advanced guard of five thouſand men, poſted among rocks, a ſtation where one hundred reſolute men might have ſtopped the march of a large army, fled at their firſt approach. The twenty thouſand men that lay behind them, perceiving the flight of their fellow ſoldiers, took the alarm, and carried their terror and confuſion with them into the camp. All the poſts were carried in two days; and what upon other occaſions would have been reckoned three diſtinct victories, did not retard the king's march for the ſpace of one hour. He appeared then at laſt with his eight thouſand men, exhauſted by the fatigues of ſo long a march, before a camp of eighty thouſand Muſcovites, defended by a hundred and fifty pieces of cannon; and, ſcarce allowing his troops any time for reſt, he inſtantly gave orders for the attack.

The ſignal was two fuſees, and the word in German, "With the aid of God." A general officer having repreſented to him the greatneſs of the danger, "What, ſays he, do not you think, that with my eight thouſand brave Swedes, I may eaſily beat eighty thouſand Ruſſians?" But ſoon after, fearing that what he had ſaid might ſavour too much of gaſconade, he ran after the officer, "And are not you (ſays he) of the ſame opinion? have not I a double advantage over the enemy? one, that their cavalry can be of no ſervice to them; the other, that the place being narrow, their number will only incommode them; and thus in reality I ſhall be ſtronger than they." The officer did not care to differ from him; and thus they

they marched againſt the Muſcovites about mid-day, on the 30th of November 1700.

As ſoon as their cannon had made a breach in their intrenchments, the Swedes advanced with ſcrewed bayonets, having a furious ſhower of ſnow on their backs, which drove full in the face of the enemy. The Ruſſians ſtood the ſhock for half an hour, without flinching. The king made his attack upon the right of the camp, where the czar's quarters lay, hoping to come to a rencounter with him, as he did not know that he had gone in queſt of the forty thouſand men, who were daily expected to arrive. At the firſt diſcharge of the enemy's muſkets, he received a ſhot in his neck; but as it was a ſpent ball, it lodged in the folds of his black neckcloath, and did him no harm. His horſe was killed under him. Mr. de Spar told me, that the king mounted another horſe with great agility, ſaying, "Theſe fellows make me go thorough my exerciſe;" and continued to fight and give orders with the ſame preſence of mind. After an engagement of three hours, the entrenchments were forced on all ſides. The king purſued the right of the enemy as far as the river Narva, with his left wing; if we may be allowed to call by that name about four thouſand men, who were in purſuit of near forty thouſand. The bridge broke under the fugitives, and the river was immediately filled with dead carcaſes. The reſt returned to their camp, without knowing whither they went; and finding ſome barracks, they took poſt behind them. There they defended themſelves for a while, as they were not able to make their eſcape; but at laſt their generals Dolgorouky, Gollofkin, and Federowitz, ſurrendered themſelves to the king, and laid their arms

arms at his feet; and while they were preſenting them to him, the duke de Croi came up and ſurrendered himſelf with thirty officers.

Charles received all theſe priſoners of diſtinction with as much civility and politeneſs as if he had been paying them the honours of an entertainment in his own court. He detained none but the general officers. All the ſubalterns and common ſoldiers were diſarmed and conducted to the river Narva, where they were ſupplied with boats for paſſing over, and allowed to return to their own country. In the mean time night came on, and the right wing of the Muſcovites ſtill continued the fight. The Swedes had not loſt above ſix hundred men. Eight thouſand Muſcovites had been killed in their intrenchments; many were drowned; many had croſſed the river; and yet there ſtill remained in the camp a ſufficient number to cut off the Swedes to the laſt man. But the loſs of battles is not ſo much owing to the number of the killed, as to the timidity of thoſe who ſurvive. The king employed the ſmall remains of the day in ſeizing upon the enemy's artillery. He took poſſeſſion of an advantageous poſt between the camp and the city, where he ſlept a few hours upon the ground, wrapt up in his cloak, intending, at day-break, to fall upon the left wing of the enemy, which was not yet intirely routed. But at two o'clock in the morning, general Wade, who commanded that wing, having heard of the gracious reception the king had given to the other generals, and of his having diſmiſſed all the ſubaltern officers and ſoldiers, ſent a meſſenger to him, begging he would grant him the ſame favour. The conqueror replied, that he ſhould have it, provided he would come

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at the head of his troops, and make them lay their arms and colours at his feet. Soon after the general appeared with his Muſcovites, to the number of about thirty thouſand. They marched, both ſoldiers and officers, with their heads uncovered, through leſs than ſeven thouſand Swedes. The ſoldiers, as they paſſed the king, threw their guns and ſwords upon the ground, and the officers preſented him with their enſigns and colours. He cauſed the whole of this multitude to be conducted over the river, without detaining a ſingle ſoldier. Had he kept them, the number of priſoners would at leaſt have been five times greater than that of the conquerors.

After this, he entered victorious into Narva, accompanied by the duke de Croi, and other general officers of the Muſcovites. He ordered their ſwords to be reſtored to them all; and knowing that they wanted money, and that the merchants of Narva would not lend them any, he ſent a thouſand ducats to the duke de Croi, and five hundred to every Muſcovite officer, who could not ſufficiently admire the civility of this treatment, of which they were incapable of forming the leaſt conception. An account of the victory was immediately drawn up at Narva, in order to be ſent to Stockholm, and to the allies of Sweden; but the king expunged with his own hand every circumſtance in the relation that tended too much to his own honour, or ſeemed to reflect upon the czar. His modeſty however could not hinder them from ſtriking at Stockholm ſeveral medals to perpetuate the memory of theſe events. Among others they ſtruck one which repreſented the king on one ſide, ſtanding on a pedeſtal, to which were chained a Muſcovite, a Dane,

a Dane, and a Polander; and on the reverſe a Hercules, holding his club, and treading upon a Cerberus, with this inſcription: *Tres uno contudit ictu.*

Among the priſoners taken at the battle of Narva, there was one whoſe fate exhibited a remarkable inſtance of the great inconſtancy of fortune. He was the eldeſt ſon and heir of the king of Georgia; his name the czarafis Artſchelou. This title of czarafis, among the Tartars, as well as in Muſcovy, ſignifies prince, or ſon of the czar; for the word czar, or tſar, ſignified king among the ancient Scythians, from whom all theſe people are deſcended, and is not derived from the Cæſars of Rome, ſo long unknown to theſe barbarians. His father Mittelleſki, czar, and maſter of the moſt beautiful part of the country, lying between the mountains of Ararat and the eaſtern coaſts of the Black Sea, having been expelled from his kingdom by his own ſubjects, in 1688, had rather choſen to throw himſelf into the arms of the emperor of Muſcovy, than to apply to the Turks for aſſiſtance. His ſon, a youth of nineteen years of age, followed Peter the Great in his expedition againſt the Swedes, and was taken fighting by ſome Finland ſoldiers, who had already ſtripped him, and were upon the point of killing him. Count Renſchild reſcued him from their hands, ſupplied him with cloaths, and preſented him to his maſter. Charles ſent him to Stockholm, where the unfortunate prince died in a few years after. The king, upon ſeeing him depart, could not help making, in the hearing of his officers, a very natural reflection on the ſtrange fate of an Aſiatick prince, born at the foot of Mount Caucaſus, and going to live a priſoner among the

the ſnows of Sweden. "It is juſt, ſays he, as if I were one day to be a priſoner among the Crim Tartars." Theſe words made no impreſſion at that time; but, in the ſequel, there was but too much occaſion to remember them, when the event had proved them to be a prediction.

The czar was advancing, by long marches, with a body of forty thouſand Ruſſians, in full hopes of ſurrounding his enemy on all ſides; but before he had proceeded half way, he received intelligence of the battle of Narva, and of the diſperſion of his whole army. He was not ſo fooliſh as to think of attacking with his forty thouſand raw and undiſciplined troops, a conqueror, who had lately defeated eighty thouſand men in their entrenchments. He returned home, with a determined reſolution of diſciplining his troops, at the ſame time that he civilized his ſubjects. "I know, ſays he, that the Swedes will beat us for a long time; but, at laſt, they will teach us to beat them." Moſcow, his capital, was in the utmoſt terror and conſternation at the news of this defeat. Such was the pride and ignorance of the people, that they actually imagined they had been conquered by a power more than human, and that the Swedes were ſo many magicians. This opinion was ſo general, that public prayers were ordered to be put up to St. Nicholas, the patron of Muſcovy, on the occaſion. The form of theſe prayers is too ſingular to be omitted. It runs thus:

"O thou, who art our perpetual comforter in all our adverſities, great St. Nicholas, infinitely powerful, by what ſin have we offended thee, in our ſacrifices, kneelings, bowings, and thankſgivings, that thou haſt thus abandoned us? We implored

plored thy aſſiſtance againſt theſe terrible, inſolent, enraged, dreadful, unconquerable deſtroyers, when, like lions and bears robbed of their young, they fell upon, terrified, wounded, and ſlew by thouſands, us who are thy people. As it is impoſſible that this ſhould have happened without ſorcery and witchcraft, we beſeech thee, O great St. Nicholas, to be our champion and ſtandard-bearer, to deliver us from this troop of ſorcerers, and to drive them far from our frontiers, with the recompenſe they deſerve."

While the Muſcovites were thus complaining of their defeat to St. Nicholas, Charles XII. returned thanks to God, and prepared himſelf for new victories.

The king of Poland had reaſon to fear, that his enemy, already victorious over the Danes and the Muſcovites, would ſoon turn his arms againſt him. He entered into a cloſer alliance with the czar than ever he had done before. Theſe two princes agreed upon an interview, in order to concert their meaſures. They met at Birſen, a ſmall town in Lithuania, without any of thoſe formalities which ſerve only to retard buſineſs, and neither ſuited their ſituation nor their humour. The princes of the North viſit one another with a familiarity that has not yet taken place in the more ſouthern parts of Europe. Peter and Auguſtus ſpent fifteen days together, in the enjoyment of pleaſures, which were even ſomewhat extravagant; for the czar, amidſt his cares for the reformation of his ſubjects, could never correct his dangerous propenſion to debauchery.

The king of Poland engaged to furniſh the czar with fifty thouſand German troops, which were to be hired from ſeveral princes, and for which the

the czar was to pay. Peter, on the other hand, was to ſend fifty thouſand Ruſſians into Poland, to learn the art of war, and promiſed to pay to Auguſtus three millions of rix dollars in two years. This treaty, had it been carried into execution, might have proved fatal to the king of Sweden: it was a ſure and ready method of rendering the Muſcovites good ſoldiers: perhaps it was forging chains for a part of Europe.

Charles XII. exerted his utmoſt endeavours to prevent the king of Poland from reaping any benefit from this league. After having paſſed the winter at Narva, he appeared in Livonia in the neighbourhood of Riga, the very town which Auguſtus had in vain beſieged. The Saxon troops were poſted along the river Duna, which is very broad in that place; and Charles, who lay onthe other ſide of the river, was obliged to diſpute the paſſage. The Saxons were not commanded by their own prince, who was then ſick, but were headed by Marſhal Stenau, who acted as general, under whom commanded prince Ferdinand duke of Courland, and that ſame Patkul, who had formerly, at the hazard of his life, vindicated the privileges of his country, againſt Charles XI. by his pen, and now defended the ſame cauſe againſt Charles XII. by his arms. The king of Sweden had cauſed ſome large boats to be built of a new conſtruction, whoſe ſides were much higher than ordinary, and could be raiſed or let down, like a draw-bridge. When raiſed they covered the troops on board, and when let down they ſerved as a bridge to land them. He likewiſe made uſe of another artifice. Having obſerved that the wind blew from the north, where he lay, to the ſouth, where the enemy were encamped, he ſet fire

fire to a large heap of wet ſtraw, which diffuſing a thick ſmoak over the river, prevented the Saxons from ſeeing his troops, or obſerving what he was going to do. Under cover of this cloud, he diſpatched ſome barks filled with more of the ſame ſmoaking ſtraw; ſo that the cloud always encreaſing, and being driven by the wind directly to the face of the enemy, rendered it impoſſible for them to know whether the king was paſſing or not. Mean while, he alone conducted the execution of his ſtratagem; and when he had reached the middle of the river, "Well, ſays he to general Renſchild, the Duna will be as favourable to us as the ſea of Copenhagen; take my word for it, general, we ſhall beat them." He arrived at the other ſide in a quarter of an hour, and was ſorry to find that he was only the fourth perſon that leapt on ſhore. He forthwith landed his cannon, and drew up his troops in order of battle, while the enemy, blinded with ſmoke, could make no oppoſition, except by a few random ſhot. At laſt the miſt being diſperſed by the wind, the Saxons ſaw the king of Sweden already advancing againſt them.

Mareſchal Stenau loſt not a moment. As ſoon as he obſerved the Swedes, he ruſhed upon them with the flower of his cavalry. The violent ſhock of this body falling upon the Swedes juſt as they were forming, threw them into confuſion. They gave way, were broken, and purſued even into the river. The king of Sweden rallied them in a moment, in the midſt of the water, with as much compoſure as if he had been making a review; then the Swedes, marching more compact than before, repulſed mareſchal Stenau, and advanced into the plain. Stenau, finding his troops

begin

begin to ſtagger, acted like an able general. He made them retire into a dry place, flanked with a moraſs and a wood, where his artillery lay. The advantage of the ground, and the time which the Saxons had thus obtained, of recovering from their firſt ſurprize, reſtored to them their former courage. Charles immediately began the attack. He had fifteen thouſand men: Stenau and the duke of Courland about twelve thouſand, with no other artillery than one diſmounted cannon. The battle was obſtinate and bloody. The duke had two horſes killed under him: he penetrated thrice into the heart of the king's guards; but at length being unhorſed by a blow with the but-end of a muſket, his army was thrown into confuſion, and no longer diſputed the victory. His cuiraſſiers carried him off with great difficulty, all bruiſed, and half dead, from the thickeſt of the fight, and from under the horſes heels, which trampled on him.

Immediately after this victory, the king of Sweden advanced to Mittau, the capital of Courland. All the towns of the dutchy ſurrendered to him at diſcretion: it was rather a journey than a conqueſt. From thence he paſſed without delay into Lithuania, conquering wherever he came: and he felt a pleaſing ſatisfaction, as he himſelf owned, when he entered triumphant into the town of Birſen, where the king of Poland and the czar had plotted his deſtruction but a few months before.

It was in this place that he formed the deſign of dethroning the king of Poland, by the hands of the Poles themſelves. One day when he was at table, full of this enterprize, and obſerving as uſual, the ſtricteſt temperance, wrapped up in a pro-

profound ſilence, and ſeeming, as it were, abſorbed in the greatneſs of his conceptions, a German colonel who waited upon him, ſaid with an audable voice, that the meals which the czar and the king of Poland had made in the ſame place were ſomewhat different from thoſe of his majeſty. "Yes, ſays the king, riſing, and I ſhall the more eaſily ſpoil their digeſtion." In ſhort, by intermixing a little policy with the force of his arms, he reſolved to haſten the execution of this mighty project.

Poland, a part of the ancient Sarmatia, is ſomewhat larger than France, but leſs populous, though it is more ſo than Sweden. The inhabitants were converted to Chriſtianity only about ſeven hundred and fifty years ago. It is ſomewhat ſurpriſing, that the Roman language, which never penetrated into that country, is now-a-days ſpoken in common no where but in Poland; there every one ſpeaks Latin, even the very ſervants. This extenſive country is very fertile; but the natives are only, on that account, ſo much the leſs induſtrious. The artiſts and tradeſmen in Poland, are Scotch, French, and eſpecially Jews. The laſt have, in this country, near three hundred ſynagogues; and multiplying too faſt, and to too great numbers, they will in time be baniſhed from it, as they have already been from Spain. They buy the corn, the cattle, and the commodities of the country at a low rate, diſpoſe of them at Dantzick, and in Germany, and ſell to the nobles at a high price wherewithal to gratify the only ſpecies of luxury which they know and love. Thus Poland, watered with the fineſt rivers in the world, rich in paſtures, and in mines of ſalt, and covered with luxuriant crops, remains

poor, in ſpite of its plenty; becauſe the people are ſlaves, and the nobles are proud and indolent.

The conſtitution of Poland is the moſt perfect model of the ancient government of the Goths and Celtæ, which hath been corrected or altered every where elſe. It is the only ſtate that has preſerved the name of republick together with the royal dignity.

Every gentleman has a right to give his vote in the election of a king, and may even be elected himſelf. This ineſtimable privilege is attended with inconveniences proportionably great. The throne is almoſt always expoſed to ſale; and as a Polander is ſeldom able to make the purchaſe, it has frequently been ſold to ſtrangers. The nobility and clergy defend their liberties againſt the king, and deprive the reſt of the nation of theirs. The body of the people are ſlaves. Such is the unhappy fate of mankind, that in every country the greater number are, one way or other, enſlaved by the leſſer. There the peaſant ſows not for himſelf, but for his lord, to whom his perſon, his lands, and even the labour of his hands belong; and who can ſell him, or cut his throat with the ſame impunity as he kills the beaſts in the field. Every gentleman is independent. He cannot be tried in a criminal cauſe but by an aſſembly of the whole nation: he cannot be arreſted till once he is condemned; ſo that he is hardly ever puniſhed. There are great numbers of poor among them. Theſe engage in the ſervice of the more wealthy, receive wages from them, and perform the meaneſt offices. They rather chuſe to ſerve their equals, than to enrich themſelves by commerce; and while they are dreſſing their maſters horſes, they give themſelves

ſelves the title of electors of kings and deſtroyers of tyrants.

To ſee a king of Poland in the pomp of royal majeſty, one would take him to be the moſt abſolute prince in Europe; and yet he is the leaſt ſo. The Poles really make with him that contract, which in other nations is only ſuppoſed to be made between the king and the ſubjects. The king of Poland, even at his conſecration, and in ſwearing to the *Pacta conventa*, abſolves his ſubjects from the oath of allegiance, ſhould he ever violate the laws of the republic.

He nominates to all offices, and confers all honours. Nothing is hereditary in Poland, but the lands and rank of the nobility. The ſon of a palatine, or of a king, has no claim to the dignity of his father. But there is this great difference betwixt the king and the republic, that the former cannot ſtrip any perſon of an office after he has beſtowed it upon him; whereas the latter may deprive him of the crown, if he tranſgreſs the laws of the ſtate.

The nobility, jealous of their liberty, frequently ſell their votes, but ſeldom their affections. They have no ſooner elected a king, than they begin to fear his ambition, and to oppoſe him by their cabals. The grandees whom he has made, and whom he cannot unmake, often become his enemies, inſtead of remaining his creatures. Thoſe who are attached to the court are hated by the reſt of the nobility, which always forms two parties; a diviſion unavoidable, and even neceſſary in thoſe countries, that muſt needs have kings, and yet preſerve their liberties.

Whatever concerns the nation is regulated in the aſſemblies of the ſtates-general, which are

called diets. Theſe ſtates are compoſed of the body of the ſenate, and of ſeveral gentlemen. The ſenators are the palatines and the biſhops: the gentlemen the deputies of the particular diets in each palatinate. In theſe great aſſemblies preſides the archbiſhop of Gneſna, primate of Poland, viceroy of the kingdom during an interregnum, and, next to the king, the firſt perſon in the ſtate. Beſides him there is ſeldom any other cardinal in Poland; becauſe the Roman purple giving no precedence in the ſenate a biſhop who ſhould be made a cardinal, would be obliged either to take his rank as ſenator, or to renounce the ſubſtantial rights of the dignity he enjoys in his own country, to ſupport the vain pretenſions of a foreign honour.

Theſe diets, by the laws of the kingdom, muſt be held alternately in Poland and Lithuania. The deputies frequently tranſact their buſineſs ſabre in hand, like the ancient Sarmatians, from whom they are ſprung, and ſometimes too intoxicated with liquor, a vice to which the Sarmatians were utter ſtrangers. Every gentleman deputed to the ſtates-general enjoys the ſame right which the tribunes of the people had at Rome, of oppoſing themſelves to the laws of the ſenate. Any one gentleman, who ſays, "I proteſt," ſtops by that ſingle word, the unanimous reſolution of all the reſt; and if he quits the place where the diet is held, the aſſembly is of courſe diſſolved.

To the diſorders ariſing from this law, they apply a remedy ſtill more dangerous. Poland is ſeldom without two factions. Unanimity in their diets being thus rendered impoſſible, each party forms confederacies, in which they decide by a plurality of voices, without any regard to the

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proteſtation of the leſſer number. Theſe aſſemblies, condemned by the laws, but authoriſed by cuſtom, are held in the king's name, though frequently without his conſent, and even againſt his intereſt; in much the ſame manner as the league in France made uſe of the name of Henry III. to ruin him; and as the parliament in England, that brought Charles I. to the block, began by prefixing his majeſty's name to all the reſolutions they took to deſtroy him. When the public commotions are ended, it belongs to the general diets either to confirm or repeal the acts of theſe confederacies. A diet can even cancel the acts of a former diet; for the ſame reaſon that in abſolute monarchies a king can aboliſh the laws of his predeceſſor, or even thoſe which have been made by himſelf.

The nobility, who make the laws of the republic, likewiſe conſtitute its ſtrength. They appear on horſeback, completely armed, upon great emergencies, and are able to make up a body of an hundred thouſand men. This great army, which is called poſpolite, moves ſlowly, and is ill governed. It cannot continue aſſembled for any length of time, for want of proviſions and forage: it has neither diſcipline, ſubordination, nor experience; but that love of liberty by which it is animated will always make it formidable.

Theſe nobles may be conquered, or diſperſed, or even held in ſubjection for a time; but they ſoon ſhake off the yoke. They compare themſelves to the reeds, which the ſtorm may bend to the ground, but which riſe again the moment the ſtorm is over. It is for this reaſon that they have no places of ſtrength: they will have themſelves to be the only bulwarks of the republick;

lick, nor do they ever ſuffer their king to build any forts, leſt he ſhould employ them leſs for their defence than their oppreſſion. Their country is intirely open, excepting two or three frontier places; ſo that if in a war, whether civil or foreign, they reſolve to ſuſtain a ſiege, they are obliged to raiſe fortifications of earth, in a hurry, to repair the old walls that are half ruined, and to enlarge the ditches that are almoſt filled up; and the town is commonly taken before the entrenchments are finiſhed.

The poſpolite are not always on horſeback to defend the country: they never mount but by order of the diets, or ſometimes in imminent dangers, by the ſimple order of the king.

The uſual guard of Poland is an army, which ought to be maintained at the expence of the republic. It is compoſed of two bodies, under two grand generals. The firſt body is that of Poland, and ſhould conſiſt of thirty-ſix thouſand men; the ſecond, to the number of twelve thouſand, is that of Lithuania. The two grand generals are independent of each other: though nominated by the king, they are accountable for their conduct to the republic alone, and have an unlimited power over their troops. The colonels are abſolute maſters of their regiments; and it is their buſineſs to maintain and pay them as well as they can. But as they are ſeldom paid themſelves, they ravage the country, ruin the peaſants, to ſatisfy their own avidity, and that of their ſoldiers. The Poliſh lords appear in theſe armies with more magnificence than they do in the towns; and their tents are more elegant than their houſes. The cavalry, which makes up two thirds of the army, is compoſed almoſt entirely of gentlemen; and is re-

remarkable for the beauty of their horſes, and the richneſs of the accoutrements and harneſs.

The gendarmes eſpecially, whom they diſtinguiſh into huſſars and pancernes, never march without ſeveral valets in their retinue, who lead their horſes; thoſe are furniſhed with bridles that are ornamented with plates and nails of ſilver, embroidered ſaddles, ſaddle bows, and gilt ſtirrups, or ſtirrups made of maſſy ſilver, with large houſings trailing on the ground, after the manner of the Turks, whoſe magnificence the Poles endeavour to imitate as much as they can.

But if the cavalry are fine and gorgeous, the infantry were at that time proportionably wretched, ill cloathed, and ill armed, without regimentals, or any thing uniform. Such at leaſt was their condition, till towards the year 1710: and yet theſe infantry, who reſemble the wandering Tartars, ſupport hunger, cold, fatigue, and all the hardſhips of war with ſurpriſing reſolution.

One may ſtill diſcern in the Poliſh ſoldiers the character of their anceſtors, the ancient Sarmatians, the ſame want of diſcipline, the ſame fury in the aſſault, the ſame readineſs to fly and to return to the charge, and the ſame cruel diſpoſition to ſlaughter when they conquer.

The king of Poland flattered himſelf at firſt, that in this preſſing neceſſity, theſe two bodies would ſupport his cauſe; that the Poliſh populace would take up arms at his orders; and that theſe forces, joined to the Saxon ſubjects, and to his Ruſſian allies, would compoſe an army, before which the ſmall number of the Swedes would not dare to appear. But he found himſelf, almoſt in an inſtant, deprived of theſe ſuccours by means of that very eagerneſs he diſcovered to have them all at once.

Accuſtomed, in his hereditary dominions, to the exerciſe of abſolute power, he too fondly imagined that he might govern in Poland as he did in Saxony. The beginning of his reign raiſed malecontents. His firſt proceedings provoked the party that had oppoſed his election, and alienated almoſt all the reſt of the nation. The Poles murmured to ſee the towns filled with Saxon garriſons, and their frontiers lined with Saxon troops. This nation, more anxious to preſerve its liberty, than to attack its neighbours, conſidered the war with Sweden, and the irruption into Livonia, as enterprizes by no means advantageous to the republic. It is very difficult to hinder a free people from ſeeing their true intereſt. The Poles were ſenſible, that if this war, undertaken without their conſent, ſhould prove unſucceſsful, their country open on all ſides, would become a prey to the king of Sweden; and that ſhould it be crowned with ſucceſs, they would be enſlaved by their own king, who being maſter of Livonia, as well as of Saxony, would ſhut up Poland between theſe two ſtates. In this alternative, either of becoming ſlaves to the king, whom they had elected, or of being pillaged by Charles XII. who was juſtly incenſed, they raiſed a clamour againſt the war, which they believed to be declared rather againſt themſelves than againſt Sweden. They conſidered the Saxons and the Muſcovites as the forgers of their chains; and obſerving ſoon after that the king of Sweden had overcome every thing that oppoſed his progreſs, and was advancing with a victorious army into the heart of Lithuania, they loudly exclaimed againſt their ſovereign, and with ſo much the greater freedom as he was unfortunate.

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Lithuania was at that time divided into two parties, that of the princes of Sapieha, and that of Oginſky. The animoſity between theſe two factions, occaſioned at firſt by private quarrels, had at laſt been inflamed into a civil war. The king of Sweden engaged the princes of Sapieha in his intereſt; and Oginſky being poorly ſupported by the Saxons, found his party almoſt annihilated. The Lithuanian army, reduced by theſe troubles and the want of money to an inconſiderable number, was partly diſperſed by the conquerors. The few that ſtill held out for the king of Poland were ſeparated into ſmall bodies of fugitive troops, who wandered up and down the country, and ſubſiſted by ſpoil. Auguſtus beheld nothing in Lithuania but the weakneſs of his own party, the hatred of his ſubjects, and an hoſtile army, conducted by a young king, incenſed, victorious, and implacable.

There was indeed an army in Poland; but inſtead of ſix and thirty thouſand men, the number preſcribed by the law, it did not amount to eighteen thouſand; and it was not only ill-paid and ill-armed, but the generals were as yet undetermined what courſe to take.

The only reſource of the king was, to order the nobility to follow him; but he durſt not expoſe himſelf to the mortification of a refuſal, which, by diſcovering his weakneſs too plainly, would of conſequence have encreaſed it.

In this ſtate of trouble and uncertainty, all the palatinates of the kingdom deſired the king to call a diet; in the ſame manner as in England, during times of danger, all the bodies of the ſtate preſent addreſſes to the ſovereign, entreating him to convoke a parliament. Auguſtus had more

need of an army than a diet, in which the actions of kings are severely canvassed. However, that he might not incense the nation beyond a possibility of reconciliation, he found it necessary to assemble a diet; which was accordingly appointed to be held at Warsaw, on the second of December 1701. He soon perceived that Charles XII. had, at least, as much power in this assembly as himself. Those who favoured the Sapieha, the Lubomirsky and their friends, the palatine Leczinsky, treasurer of the crown, and especially the partizans of the princes Sobiesky, were all of them secretly attached to the king of Sweden.

The most considerable of these partizans, and the most dangerous to the king of Poland, was cardinal Radjousky, archbishop of Gnesna, primate of the kingdom, and president of the diet. He was a man full of artifice and cunning, and entirely under the influence of an ambitious woman, who was called by the Swedes madam Cardinales, and who was egging him on to intrigue and faction. King John Sobiesky, the predecessor of Augustus, had first made him bishop of Warmia and vice-chancellor of the kingdom. Radjousky, when no more than a bishop, had obtained the cardinal's hat by the favour of the same prince. This dignity soon opened his way to the primacy; and thus by uniting in his own person whatever can impose upon mankind, he was able to undertake the most arduous enterprizes, without incurring the least danger.

After the death of John, he employed all his interest to raise prince James Sobiesky to the throne; but the torrent of public hatred ran so strong against the father, notwithstanding the eminent qualities of which he was possessed, that it

entirely excluded the ſon from that dignity. After this, the cardinal-primate joined his endeavours with thoſe of the abbé de Polignac, the French ambaſſador, to procure the crown to the prince of Conti, who was actually elected. But the money and troops of Saxony defeated all his negociations. At laſt he ſuffered himſelf to be drawn over to the party that crowned the elector of Saxony, and patiently waited for an opportunity of ſowing diſſention between the new king and the nation.

The victories of Charles XII. the protector of prince James Sobiesky, the civil war in Lithuania, the general alienation of men's minds from king Auguſtus; all theſe circumſtances made the cardinal-primate believe, that the time was now come when he might ſafely ſend back Auguſtus into Saxony, and open for king John's ſon the way to the throne. This prince, formerly the innocent object of the hatred of the Poles, was now become their darling, ever ſince the time that Auguſtus had loſt the public favour; but he durſt not as yet entertain the moſt diſtant hopes of ſo great a revolution, of which, however, the cardinal was already laying the foundation.

At firſt he ſeemed deſirous of effecting a reconciliation between the king and the republic; and diſpatched circular letters, dictated in appearance by the ſpirit of charity and concord; a common and well known ſnare, in which, however, the people are always caught. He wrote an affecting letter to the king of Sweden, conjuring him, in the name of that Saviour whom all Chriſtians adore, to give peace to Poland and her king. Charles XII. anſwered the intentions of the car-

dinal rather than his words. Mean while he remained with his victorious army in the great dutchy of Lithuania, declaring, that he would not disturb the diet; that he made war against Augustus and the Saxons, and not against the Poles; and that, far from attacking, he came only to deliver them from oppression. These letters and these answers were calculated for the public. The emissaries that were continually going and coming between the cardinal and count Piper, and the secret meetings held at the prelate's house, were the springs that regulated the motions of the diet. They proposed to dispatch an embassy to Charles XII. and unanimously required of the king, that he should bring no more Muscovites upon their frontiers, and that he should send back his Saxon troops.

The bad fortune of Augustus had already done what the diet demanded of him. The league secretly concluded with the Muscovites at Birsen, was now become as useless as it had once appeared formidable. He was far from being able to send to the czar the fifty thousand Germans, whom he had promised to raise in the empire. The czar himself, a dangerous neighbour to Poland, was in no haste to assist a divided kingdom, from whose misfortunes he hoped to derive some advantage. He contented himself with sending twenty thousand Muscovites into Lithuania, who did more mischief than the Swedes, flying every where before the conqueror, and ravaging the lands of the Poles; till at last being pursued by the Swedish generals, and finding no more to pillage, they returned in shoals to their own country. With regard to the shattered remains of the Saxon

Saxon army that was beat at Riga, Auguſtus ſent them to winter and recruit in Saxony; hoping by this ſacrifice, involuntary as it was, to regain the affection of the Poles, who were ſo highly incenſed againſt him.

The war now was turned into intrigues. The diet was ſplit into almoſt as many factions as there were palatines. One day the intereſts of king Auguſtus prevailed; the next they were diſregarded. Every one called out for liberty and juſtice; and yet no one knew what was liberty and juſtice. The time was ſpent in private cabals and public harangues. The diet neither knew what they would be at, nor what they ought to do. Great companies ſeldom ſteer the right courſe in times of public commotions; becauſe the factious are bold, and the virtuous are commonly diffident. The diet broke up in a tumultuous manner, on the 17th of February 1702, after having ſpent three months in cabals, without coming to any fixed reſolution. The ſenators, conſiſting of the palatines and biſhops, remained at Warſaw. The ſenate of Poland has a right of making laws proviſionally, which the diets ſeldom diſannul. This body being leſs numerous, and accuſtomed to buſineſs, was far leſs tumultuous, and decided with greater diſpatch.

They decreed that the embaſſy, which was propoſed in the diet, ſhould be ſent to the king of Sweden; and that the poſpolite ſhould take to arms, and hold themſelves in readineſs at all events. They made ſeveral regulations for quelling the commotions in Lithuania, and for diminiſhing the authority of the king, though leſs to be dreaded than that of Charles XII.

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Auguſtus rather choſe to receive hard laws from his conqueror than from his ſubjects. He reſolved to ſue for a peace to the king of Sweden, and to conclude a ſecret treaty with that monarch. This was a ſtep which he was obliged to conceal from the ſenate, whom he conſidered as an enemy ſtill more untractable than Charles. As the affair was of a very delicate nature, he entruſted it to the counteſs of Konigſmark, a Swediſh lady of high birth, to whom he was at that time attached. This is the lady whoſe brother became ſo famous by his unfortunate death, and whoſe ſon commanded the French armies with ſo much glory and ſucceſs. Celebrated as ſhe was for her wit and beauty, ſhe was more capable than any miniſter of bringing a negociation to a happy period. Moreover, as ſhe had an eſtate in the dominions of Charles XII. and had reſided a long time at his court, ſhe had a very plauſible pretext for waiting upon him. Accordingly ſhe repaired to the Swediſh camp in Lithuania, and immediately applied to count Piper, who too raſhly promiſed her an audience of his maſter. The counteſs, among thoſe perfections which rendered her the moſt amiable woman in Europe, poſſeſſed the happy talent of ſpeaking the languages of ſeveral countries ſhe had never ſeen, with as much eaſe and propriety as if ſhe had been a native. She even amuſed herſelf ſometimes in writing French verſes, which one might have eaſily miſtaken for the production of a perſon born at Verſailles. Thoſe which ſhe compoſed on Charles XII. are not beneath the dignity of hiſtory to mention. She introduced the heathen gods praiſing *him* for his different virtues. The piece concluded thus:

Enfin,

Enfin, chacun des Dieux diſcourant à ſa gloire,
Le plaçait par avance au Temple de Mémoire;
Mais Venus ni Bacchus n'en dirent pas un mot.

The hero's acts while other gods proclaim,
And praiſe, and promiſe him immortal fame;
Silent ſit Bacchus and the queen of love.

All her wit and charms were loſt upon ſuch a man as the king of Sweden, who conſtantly refuſed to ſee her. She therefore reſolved to throw herſelf in his way, as he rode out to take the air, which he frequently did. In this attempt ſhe at laſt ſucceeded. She met him one day in a very narrow path; and the moment ſhe obſerved him, came down from her coach. The king made her a low bow, without ſpeaking a word to her, turned about his horſe, and rode back in an inſtant. And thus the only advantage which the counteſs of Konigſmark gained from her journey was the pleaſure of ſeeing that the king of Sweden feared nobody but her.

The king of Poland was therefore obliged to throw himſelf into the arms of the ſenate. He made them two propoſals, which were laid before them by the palatine of Marienburg; the one, that they ſhould leave to him the diſpoſal of the republic, in which caſe he would engage to pay the ſoldiers two quarters advance out of his own revenue; the other, that they ſhould allow him to bring back twelve thouſand Saxons into Poland. The cardinal primate returned him an anſwer as ſevere as the king of Sweden's refuſal. He told the palatine of Marienburg, in the name of the aſſembly, "That they had reſolved to ſend

an embaſſy to Charles XII. and that he would not adviſe him to bring back any Saxons."

In this extremity, the king was deſirous of preſerving at leaſt the appearance of the royal authority. He ſent one of his chamberlains to wait upon Charles, and to learn from him where, and in what manner, his Swediſh majeſty would be pleaſed to receive the embaſſy of the king his maſter, and of the republic. Unhappily they had forgot to aſk from the Swedes a paſſport for the chamberlain. The king of Sweden, inſtead of giving him an audience, cauſed him to be thrown into priſon, ſaying, "That he expected to receive an embaſſy from the republic, and not from Auguſtus."

After this, Charles having left garriſons in ſome towns in Lithuania, advanced beyond Grodno, a city well known in Europe for the diets that are held there, but ill built, and worſe fortified.

A few miles on the other ſide of Grodno, he met the embaſſy of the republic, which conſiſted of five ſenators. They deſired, in the firſt place, to have the ceremony of their introduction properly regulated, a thing with which the king was utterly unacquainted. They demanded, that the ſenate ſhould be complimented with the title of Moſt Serene, and that the coaches of the king and ſenators ſhould be ſent to meet them. They were told in anſwer, "That the republic ſhould be ſtiled Illuſtrious, and not Moſt Serene; that the king never uſed any coaches; that he had plenty of officers in his retinue, but no ſenators; that a lieutenant-general ſhould be ſent to meet them; and that they might come on their own *horſes.*"

Charles

Charles XII. received them in his tent, with ſome appearance of military grandeur. Their converſation was full of caution and reſerve. They ſaid they were afraid of Charles XII. and did not love Auguſtus; but that it would be a ſhame for them to take the crown, in obedience to the orders of a ſtranger, from the head of that prince whom they had elected. Nothing was finally concluded; and Charles XII. gave them to underſtand, that he would ſettle all diſputes at Warſaw.

His march was preceded by a manifeſto, which the cardinal and his party ſpread over Poland in the ſpace of eight days. By this writing, Charles invited all the Poles to join him in revenging their own quarrel, and endeavoured to perſuade them that his intereſt and theirs were the ſame. They were, however, very different; but the manifeſto, ſupported by a powerful army, by the diſorder of the ſenate, and by the approach of the conqueror, made a deep impreſſion on the minds of the people. They were obliged to own Charles for their protector, becauſe he was reſolved to be ſo; and happy was it for them, that he contented himſelf with this title.

The ſenators who oppoſed Auguſtus publiſhed this manifeſto aloud, even in the royal preſence. The few who adhered to him obſerved a profound ſilence. At length, intelligence being brought that Charles was advancing by long marches, every one prepared to depart in a hurry. The cardinal left Warſaw among the firſt. The greateſt part fled with precipitation; ſome retired to their country-ſeats, there to wait the unravelling of this perplexed and intricate affair; others went to arm their friends. Nobody remained with the king but

the ambaſſadors of the emperor and the czar, the pope's nuncio, and a few biſhops and palatines who were attached to his fortunes. He was forced to fly, though nothing as yet decided in his favour. Before his departure, he haſtened to hold a council with the ſmall body of ſenators who ſtill repreſented the ſenate. Zealous as theſe were for his intereſt, they were nevertheleſs Poles; they had all conceived ſuch an utter averſion to the Saxon troops, that they durſt not grant him a liberty of recalling more than ſix thouſand of them for his defence; and they even voted that theſe ſix thouſand ſhould be commanded by the grand general of Poland, and be immediately ſent back upon the concluſion of a peace. The armies of the republic they left entirely to his diſpoſal.

After this decree of the ſenate, the king left Warſaw, too weak to reſiſt his enemies, and but little ſatisfied even with the conduct of his friends. He immediately publiſhed orders for aſſembling the poſpolite and the two armies, which were litttle more than empty names. He had nothing to hope for in Lithuania, of which the Swedes were in poſſeſſion. The army of Poland, reduced to an handful of men, was in want of arms and proviſions, and had no great inclination to the war. Moſt of the nobility, intimidated, irreſolute, and diſaffected, remained at their country-ſeats. In vain did the king, authorized by the laws of the land, command every gentleman, under pain of death, to take up arms and follow him. It was even become a problematical point whether or not they ought to obey him. His chief dependence was upon the troops of the electorate, where the form of government being wholly deſpotic, he was under no apprehenſions of being diſobeyed. He had already given

ſecret orders for the march of twelve thouſand Saxons, who were advancing with great expedition. He likewiſe recalled the eight thouſand men whom he had promiſed to the emperor in his war againſt France, and whom the neceſſity of his affairs now obliged him to withdraw. To introduce ſo many Saxons into Poland, was, in effect, to alienate the affections of all his ſubjects, and to violate the law made by his own party, which allowed only of ſix thouſand. But he well knew, that, if he proved victorious, they would not dare to complain, and if he ſhould be conquered, they would never forgive him for having introduced even the ſix thouſand. While the ſoldiers were arriving in troops, and while he was flying from one palatinate to another, and aſſembling the nobility who adhered to him, the king of Sweden reached Warſaw, on the 5th of May, 1702. The gates were opened to him at the firſt ſummons. He diſmiſſed the Poliſh garriſon, diſbanded the city-guard, poſted guards of his own in all the convenient places, and ordered the inhabitants to deliver up their arms. Satisfied with having diſarmed them, and unwilling to provoke them by any unneceſſary ſeverities, he demanded a contribution of no more than one hundred thouſand livres. Auguſtus was then aſſembling his forces at Cracow, and was greatly ſurpriſed to ſee the cardinal-primate arrive among the reſt. This man affected to maintain the decorum of his character to the laſt, and to dethrone his king with all the appearance of the moſt reſpectful behaviour. He gave him to underſtand that the king of Sweden ſeemed very well inclined to come to a reaſonable accommodation, and humbly begged leave to wait upon that monarch. Auguſtus granted

granted him what he could not refuſe, that is, the liberty of hurting himſelf.

The cardinal-primate immediately repaired to the king of Sweden, before whom he had not as yet ventured to appear. He ſaw him at Praag, not far from Warſaw, but without any of thoſe ceremonies which had been obſerved in introducing the ambaſſadors of the republic. He found the conqueror clad in a coat of coarſe blue cloth, with gilt braſs buttons, jack-boots, and buff ſkin gloves that reached up to his elbows. He was in a room without hangings, attended by the duke of Holſtein, count Piper his firſt miniſter, and ſeveral general officers. The king advanced a few ſteps to meet the cardinal; they talked together ſtanding for about a quarter of an hour; Charles put an end to the conference, by ſaying aloud, "I will never give the Poles peace, till they have elected a new king." The cardinal, who expected ſuch a declaration, cauſed it to be immediately notified to all the palatinates, aſſuring them that he was extremely ſorry for it, but repreſented to them, at the ſame time, the abſolute neceſſity they were under of complying with the conqueror's requeſt.

Upon receiving this intelligence, the king of Poland plainly perceived that he muſt either loſe his crown, or preſerve it by a battle; and he exerted his utmoſt efforts in order to ſucceed in the deciſion of this important quarrel. All his Saxon troops were arrived from the frontiers of Saxony. The nobility of the palatinate of Cracow, where he ſtill remained, came in a body to offer him their ſervice. He exhorted them to remember the oaths they had taken; and they promiſed to ſhed the laſt drop of their blood in ſupport

port of his cauſe. Strengthened by theſe ſuccours, and by the troops which bore the name of the army of the crown, he went, for the firſt time, in queſt of the king of Sweden; nor was he long in finding him; for that prince was already advancing towards Cracow.

The two kings met on the 13th of July 1702, in a ſpacious plain near Cliſſau, between Warſaw and Cracow. Auguſtus had near four and twenty thouſand men; Charles XII. had not above twelve thouſand. The battle began by a general diſcharge of the artillery. At the firſt volley of the Saxons, the duke of Holſtein, who commanded the Swediſh cavalry, a young prince of great courage and virtue, received a cannon-ball in his reins. The king asked if he was killed, and was anſwered in the affirmative. He made no reply: a few tears fell from his eyes: he covered his face with his hands for a moment; and then, of a ſudden, ſpurring on his horſe with all his might, he ruſhed into the thickeſt of the enemy at the head of the guards.

The king of Poland did every thing that could be expected from a prince who fought for his crown. Thrice in perſon did he rally his troops, and lead them up to the charge; but the Saxons only could be ſaid to fight for him: the Poles, who formed his right wing, fled to a man, at the very beginning of the battle; ſome through fear, and others thro' diſaffection. The good fortune of Charles XII. carried all before it; he gained a complete victory. He took poſſeſſion of the enemy's camp, their colours, and artillery; and Auguſtus's military-cheſt fell into his hands. He halted not a moment on the field of battle, but marched directly

directly to Cracow, purſuing the king of Poland, who fled before him.

The citizens of Cracow were bold enough to ſhut the gates upon the conqueror. He cauſed them to be burſt open. The garriſon did not venture to fire a ſingle gun; but were driven with whips and canes into the caſtle, into which the king entered pell-mell with them. Charles obſerving an officer of the artillery going to fire a cannon, ran up to him and ſnatched the match out of his hand. The commander fell on his knees before him. Three Swediſh regiments were lodged at free quarters among the citizens, and the town was taxed with a contribution of an hundred thouſand rix-dollars. The count de Steinbock, who was appointed governor of the city, being informed that ſome treaſures were hid in the tombs of the Poliſh kings, in St. Nicholas church at Cracow, cauſed them to be opened. Nothing was found there but ſome ornaments of gold and ſilver, belonging to the churches. Of theſe he took a part; and Charles XII. even ſent a golden cup to one of the Swediſh churches; an action that might have raiſed the Poliſh catholics againſt him, had any thing been able to withſtand the terror of his arms.

He left Cracow with a determined reſolution to purſue Auguſtus without intermiſſion. At the diſtance of a few miles from the city, his horſe fell and broke his thigh-bone. They were obliged to carry him back to Cracow, where he remained confined to his bed for ſix weeks, in the hands of the ſurgeons. This accident gave Auguſtus a little reſpite. He forthwith cauſed it to be ſpread abroad thro' Poland and Germany, that *Charles XII.* was killed by the fall. This report, which

which gained credit for ſome time, filled the minds of all men with doubt and apprehenſion. During this interval, he aſſembled at Marienburg, and then at Lublin, all the orders of the kingdom, which had been already convoked at Sendomir. The aſſembly was very full, as few palatinates refuſed to ſend their deputies thither. He regained the affections of moſt of them by preſents and promiſes, and by that affability without which abſolute kings cannot be beloved, nor elective kings maintain themſelves on the throne. The diet were ſoon undeceived concerning the falſe report of the king of Sweden's death; but that large body was already put in motion, and ſuffered itſelf to be carried along by the impulſe it had received; all the members ſwore to continue faithful to their ſovereign: ſo ſubject to change are all great companies! Even the cardinal-primate himſelf, who ſtill pretended a regard for Auguſtus, repaired to the diet of Lublin; where he kiſſed the king's hand, and readily took the oath as well as the other members. The ſubſtance of the oath was, that they had never attempted, nor ever would attempt, any thing prejudicial to the intereſt of Auguſtus. The king excuſed the cardinal from the firſt part of the oath, and the prelate bluſhed while he ſwore to the laſt. The reſult of all the deliberations of this diet was, that the republic of Poland ſhould maintain an army of fifty thouſand men at their own expence for the ſervice of their ſovereign; that they ſhould allow the Swedes ſix weeks time to declare whether they were for peace or war; and the ſame time to the princes of Sapieha, the original authors of the troubles in Lithuania, to come and aſk pardon from the king of Poland.

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In the mean time Charles XII. being cured of his wound, overturned all their deliberations. Unalterably fixt in his reſolution of forcing the Poles to dethrone their king with their own hands, he cauſed a new aſſembly to be convoked at Warſaw, by the intrigues of the cardinal, in oppoſition to that of Lublin. His generals repreſented to him, that this negociation might poſſibly be involved in endleſs delays, and by that means be rendered ineffectual; that, in the mean time, the Muſcovites were every day becoming a more equal match for the troops which he had left in Livonia and Ingria; that the ſkirmiſhes which frequently happened between the Swedes and Ruſſians in theſe provinces did not always turn out to the advantage of the former; and, finally, that his own preſence might ſoon be neceſſary in thoſe quarters. Charles, as ſteady in the proſecution of his ſchemes, as he was brisk and vigorous in action, replied; "Should it oblige me to remain here for fifty years, I will not depart till I have dethroned the king of Poland."

He left the aſſembly of Warſaw to combat that of Lublin, by their ſpeeches and writings, and to juſtify their proceedings by the laws of the kingdom; laws always equivocal, which each party interpret according to their pleaſure, and which ſucceſs alone can render inconteſtable. As for himſelf, having reinforced his victorious troops with ſix thouſand horſe and eight thouſand foot, which he had received from Sweden, he marched againſt the remains of the Saxon army, which he had beat at Cliſſau, and which had found time to rally and recruit, while his fall from his horſe had confined him to his bed. This army ſhunned *his approach*, and retired towards Pruſſia, to the

north-weſt of Warſaw. The river Bug lay between him and the enemy. Charles ſwam acroſs it at the head of his cavalry: the infantry went to look for a ford ſomewhat higher. He came up with the Saxons on the firſt of May 1703, at a place called Pultesk. General Stenau commanded them to the number of about ten thouſand. The king of Sweden, in his precipitate march, had brought no more than the ſame number along with him, confident that a leſs number would be ſufficient. So great was the terror of his arms, that one half of the Saxon troops fled at his approach, without waiting for the battle. General Stenau, with two regiments, kept his ground for a moment; but was ſoon hurried along in the general flight of his army, which was diſperſed before it was vanquiſhed. The Swedes did not take above a thouſand priſoners, nor kill above ſix hundred men, having more difficulty in purſuing than in defeating the enemy.

Auguſtus having now nothing left him but the ſhattered remains of his Saxons, who were every where defeated, retired in haſte to Thorn, an ancient city of Royal Pruſſia, ſituated on the Viſtula, and under the protection of the Poles. Charles immediately prepared to beſiege it. The king of Poland, not thinking himſelf ſecure in this place, withdrew from it, and flew into every corner of Poland, where he could poſſibly find any ſoldiers, and into which the Swedes had not as yet penetrated. Mean while Charles, amidſt ſo many rapid marches, ſwimming acroſs rivers, and hurried along with his infantry mounted behind his cavalry, had not been able to bring up his cannon to Thorn; he was therefore obliged to wait till

a train of artillery ſhould be brought from Sweden by ſea.

While he tarried here, he fixed his quarters at the diſtance of a few miles from the city, in reconnoitring which he frequently approached too near the ramparts. In theſe dangerous excurſions, the plain dreſs which he wore was of greater ſervice to him than he imagined, as it prevented his being diſtinguiſhed and marked out by the enemy, who would not have failed to fire upon him. One day, having advanced too near the fortifications, attended by one of his generals called Lieven, who was dreſſed in a blue-coat * trimmed with gold, and fearing leſt the general ſhould be too eaſily diſtinguiſhed, he ordered him to walk behind him. To this he was prompted by that greatneſs of ſoul which was ſo natural to him, that it even prevented his reflecting on the imminent danger to which he expoſed his own life, in order to preſerve that of his ſubject. Lieven perceiving his error too late, in having put on a remarkable dreſs, which endangered all thoſe who were near him, and being equally concerned for the king where-ever he was, heſitated for a moment whether or not he ſhould obey him. In the midſt of this conteſt, the king takes him by the arm, puts himſelf before him, and ſcreens him with his body. At that inſtant, a cannon-ball taking them in flank, ſtruck the general dead upon the very ſpot which the king had hardly quitted. The death of this man, killed exactly

* In the former editions we gave this officer a ſcarlet coat; but the chaplain Norberg hath ſo inconteſtibly proved it to have been a blue one, that we have thought proper to correct the error.

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in his ſtead, and becauſe he had endeavoured to ſave him, contributed not a little to confirm him in the opinion, which he always entertained, of abſolute predeſtination; and made him believe that his fate, which had preſerved him in ſuch a ſingular manner, reſerved him for the execution of greater undertakings.

Every thing ſucceeded with him: his negociations and his arms were equally fortunate. He was preſent, as it were, in every part of Poland. His grand general Renſchild was in the heart of the kingdom with a large body of troops. About thirty thouſand Swedes, under different generals, were poſted towards the north and eaſt upon the frontiers of Muſcovy, and withſtood the united efforts of the whole Ruſſian empire; and Charles was in the weſt, at the other end of Poland, with the flower of his army.

The king of Denmark, tied up by the treaty of Travendal, which his weakneſs had hindered him from breaking, remained quiet. That prudent monarch did not venture to diſcover the diſguſt he felt at ſeeing the king of Sweden ſo near his dominions. At a greater diſtance towards the ſouth-weſt, between the rivers Elbe and Weſer, lay the dutchy of Bremen, the moſt remote of all the ancient conqueſts of the Swedes. This country was filled with ſtrong garriſons, and opened to the conqueror a free paſſage into Saxony and the empire. Thus, from the German Ocean almoſt to the mouth of the Boriſthenes, comprehending the whole breadth of Europe, and even to the gates of Moſcow, all was in conſternation; and every one was daily expecting a general revolution. Charles's ſhips, which were now maſters of the Baltick, were employed in tranſporting to

Sweden the priſoners he had taken in Poland. Sweden, undiſturbed in the midſt of theſe mighty commotions, enjoyed the ſweets of peace, and ſhared in the glory of its king, without bearing the burden of the war; inaſmuch as its victorious troops were paid and maintained at the expence of the conquered.

While all the northern powers were thus kept in awe by the arms of Charles XII. the town of Dantzick ventured to incur his diſpleaſure. Fourteen frigates and forty tranſports were bringing the king a reinforcement of ſix thouſand men, with cannon and ammunition, to form the ſiege of Thorn. Theſe ſuccours muſt neceſſarily paſs up the Weiſſel. At the mouth of this river ſtands Dantzick, a free and wealthy town, which, together with Thorn and Elbing, enjoys the ſame privileges in Poland as the imperial towns poſſeſs in Germany. Its liberty hath been alternately attacked by the Danes, the Swedes, and ſome German princes; and nothing hath preſerved it from bondage but the mutual jealouſy of theſe rival powers. Count Steinbock, one of the Swediſh generals, aſſembled the magiſtrates in the king's name, and demanded a paſſage for the troops and ammunition. The magiſtrates were guilty of a piece of imprudence very common with thoſe who treat with people more powerful than themſelves; they durſt neither refuſe nor grant his demands. General Steinbock obliged them to grant more than he had at firſt demanded. He exacted from the city a contribution of an hundred thouſand crowns, as a puniſhment for their imprudent refuſal. At laſt the recruits, the cannon, and ammunition, being arrived before Thorn, the ſiege was begun on the 22d of September.

Robel,

Robel, governor of the place, defended it for a month with a garriſon of five thouſand men. At the expiration of that term he was obliged to ſurrender at diſcretion. The garriſon were made priſoners of war, and tranſported to Sweden. Robel was preſented to the king unarmed. That prince, who never loſt an opportunity of honouring merit in his enemies, gave him a ſword with his own hand, made him a handſome preſent in money, and diſmiſſed him on his parole. But the poor and paultry town was condemned to pay forty thouſand crowns; an exceſſive contribution for ſuch a place.

Elbing, built on an arm of the Weiſſel, founded by the Teutonic knights, and annexed likewiſe to Poland, did not profit by the miſconduct of the Dantzickers, but heſitated too long about granting a paſſage to the Swediſh troops. It was more ſeverely puniſhed than Dantzick. On the 13th of December Charles entered it at the head of four thouſand men, with bayonets fixed to the ends of their muſkets. The inhabitants, ſtruck with terror, fell upon their knees in the ſtreets, and begged for mercy. He cauſed them all to be diſarmed; quartered his ſoldiers upon them; and then having aſſembled the magiſtrates, exacted that ſame day a contribution of two hundred and ſixty thouſand crowns. There were in the town two hundred pieces of cannon and four hundred thouſand weight of powder, which he likewiſe ſeized. A battle gained would not have procured him ſo many advantages. All theſe ſucceſſes paved the way for the dethroning of Auguſtus.

Hardly had the cardinal taken an oath that he would make no attempts againſt his ſovereign, when he repaired to the aſſembly of Warſaw, al-

ways under the ſpecious pretence of peace. When he arrived there he talked of nothing but obedience and concord, though he was accompanied by a number of ſoldiers whom he had raiſed on his own eſtate. At laſt he threw off the mask; and, on the 14th of February 1704, declared, in the name of the aſſembly, "That Auguſtus, elector of Saxony, was incapable of wearing the crown of Poland." All the members with one voice pronounced the throne to be vacant. It was the intention of the king of Sweden, and conſequently of the diet, to raiſe prince James Sobieski to the throne of king John his father. James Sobieski was then at Breſlaw in Sileſia, waiting with impatience for the crown which his father had worn. While he was one day a-hunting a few leagues from Breſlaw, in company with prince Conſtantine, one of his brothers, thirty Saxon horſemen, ſent privately by king Auguſtus, iſſued ſuddenly from a neighbouring wood, ſurrounded the two princes, and carried them off without reſiſtance. They had prepared freſh horſes, upon which they conducted them to Leipſick, and committed them to cloſe cuſtody. This ſtroke diſconcerted the meaſures of Charles, the cardinal, and the aſſembly of Warſaw.

Fortune, which ſports herſelf with crowned heads, expoſed Auguſtus, almoſt at the ſame time, to the danger of being taken himſelf. He was at table, three leagues from Cracow, relying upon an advanced guard which was poſted at ſome diſtance, when, all of a ſudden, general Renſchild appeared, after having carried off the guard. The king of Poland had but juſt time to get on horſeback, with ten others. General Renſchild purſued him for four days, juſt upon the

the point of ſeizing him every moment. The king fled to Sendomir: the Swediſh general purſued him thither; and it was only by a piece of good fortune that he made his eſcape.

Mean while the king's party and that of the cardinal treated each other as traitors to their country. The army of the crown was divided between the two factions. Auguſtus, being at laſt obliged to accept of aſſiſtance from the Ruſſians, was ſorry that he had not applied to them ſooner. One while he flew into Saxony, where his reſources were exhauſted; at another he returned to Poland, where no one durſt ſerve him; while in the mean time the king of Sweden, victorious and unmoleſted, ruled in Poland with uncontrouled authority.

Count Piper, who was as great a politician as his maſter was a hero, adviſed Charles XII. to take the crown of Poland to himſelf. He repreſented how eaſy it would be to accompliſh ſuch a ſcheme with a victorious army, and a powerful party in the heart of the kingdom, which was already ſubdued. He tempted him with the title of "Defender of the Evangelick Religion;" a name which flattered the ambition of Charles. It would be eaſy, he ſaid, to effect in Poland what Guſtavus Vaſa had effected in Sweden; to eſtabliſh the Lutheran religion, and to break the chains of the people, who were now held in ſlavery by the nobility and clergy. Charles yielded to the temptation for a moment; but glory was his idol. To it he ſacrificed his own intereſt, and the pleaſure he would have enjoyed in taking Poland from the pope. He told count Piper, that he was much happier in beſtowing than in gaining kingdoms; and added with a ſmile, "You

were made to be the miniſter of an Italian prince."

Charles was ſtill near Thorn, in that part of Royal Pruſſia which belongs to Poland. From thence he extended his views to what was paſſing at Warſaw, and kept all the neighbouring powers in awe. Prince Alexander, brother of the two Sobieſkis who were carried into Sileſia, came to implore his aid in revenging his wrongs. Charles granted his deſire the more readily, as he thought he could eaſily gratify it, and that, at the ſame time, he ſhould be avenging himſelf. But being extremely deſirous of giving Poland a king, he adviſed prince Alexander to mount the throne, from which fortune ſeemed determined to exclude his brother. Little did he expect a refuſal. Prince Alexander told him that nothing ſhould ever induce him to make an advantage of his elder brother's misfortune. The king of Sweden, count Piper, all his friends, and eſpecially the young palatine of Poſnania, Staniſlaus Leczinsky, preſſed him to accept of the crown; but he remained unmoved by all their importunities. The neighbouring princes were aſtoniſhed to hear of this uncommon refuſal; and knew not which to admire moſt: a king of Sweden, who, at twenty-two years of age, gave away the crown of Poland, or prince Alexander, who refuſed to accept it.

THE

THE HISTORY OF CHARLES XII. KING of SWEDEN.

BOOK III.

THE CONTENTS.

STANISLAUS LECZINSKY elected King of POLAND. Death of the Cardinal-primate. Skilful Retreat of General SCHULLEMBURG. Exploits of the Czar. Foundation of PETERSBURG. Battle of FRAVENSTAD. CHARLES enters SAXONY. Peace of ALRANSTADT. AUGUSTUS abdicates the Crown in Favour of STANISLAUS. General PATKUL, the Czar's Plenipotentiary, is broke upon the Wheel and quartered. CHARLES receives the Ambaſſadors of foreign Princes in SAXONY: And goes to DRESDEN to viſit AUGUSTUS before his Departure.

YOUNG Staniſlaus Leczinsky was then deputed by the aſſembly of Warſaw to go to the king of Sweden and give him an account of ſeveral differences which had ariſen among them, ſince the time that prince James was carried off. Staniſlaus had a very engaging aſpect, full of cou-

rage and ſweetneſs, with an air of probity and frankneſs, which, of all external advantages, is certainly the greateſt, and gives more weight to words than even eloquence itſelf. Charles was ſurpriſed to hear him talk with ſo much judgment of Auguſtus, the aſſembly, the cardinal-primate, and the different intereſts that divided Europe. King Staniſlaus did me the honour to inform me, that he ſaid to the king of Sweden in Latin, "How can we elect a king, if the two princes, James and Conſtantine Sobieski, are held in captivity?" and that Charles replied, "How can we deliver the republic if we don't elect a king?" This converſation was the only intrigue that placed Staniſlaus on the throne. Charles prolonged the converſation, on purpoſe that he might the better found the genius of the young deputy. After the audience, he ſaid aloud, that he had not ſeen a man ſo fit to reconcile all parties. He immediately made inquiry into the character of the palatine Leczinsky, and found that he was a man of great courage and inured to labour; that he always lay on a kind of ſtraw mattreſs, requiring no ſervice from his domeſtics; that he was temperate to a degree rarely known in that climate; liberal with oeconomy; adored by his vaſſals; and perhaps the only lord in Poland who had any friends, at a time when men acknowledged no ties but thoſe of intereſt and faction. This character, which in many particulars reſembled his own, determined him entirely. After the conference he ſaid aloud, "There is the man that ſhall always be my friend." The meaning of which words was ſoon perceived to be, "There is the man that ſhall be king."

As ſoon as the primate of Poland underſtood that Charles XII. had nominated the palatine Lec-

Leczinsky, in much the ſame manner as Alexander nominated Abdalonimus, he haſtened to the king of Sweden, to try if poſſible to divert him from his reſolution; being deſirous that the crown ſhould devolve on one Lubomirsky. "But what have you to object againſt Staniſlaus Leczinsky?" ſaid the conqueror. "Sir, (ſaid the primate) he is too young." "He is much about my age," replied the king dryly; and turning his back upon the prelate, immediately diſpatched the count de Hoorn, to acquaint the aſſembly of Warſaw, that they muſt chuſe a king in five days, and that Staniſlaus Leczinsky muſt be the man. The count de Hoorn arrived on the 7th of July, and fixed the 12th for the day of election, with as much eaſe and indifference as if he had been ordering the decampment of a battalion. The cardinal-primate, diſappointed of the fruit of ſo many intrigues, returned to the aſſembly, where he left no ſtone unturned to defeat an election in which he had no ſhare. But the king of Sweden having come incognito to Warſaw, he was obliged to hold his peace. All that the primate could do was to abſent himſelf from the election: unable to oppoſe the conqueror, and unwilling to aſſiſt him, he confined himſelf to an uſeleſs neutrality.

Saturday the 12th of July, the day fixed for the election, being come, the aſſembly met at three in the afternoon at Colo, the place appointed for the ceremony; the biſhop of Poſnania acting as preſident, in the room of the cardinal primate. He came attended by ſeveral gentlemen of the party. The count de Hoorn and two other general officers aſſiſted publicly at the ſolemnity, as ambaſſadors-extraordinary from Charles to the republic. The ſeſſion laſted till nine in the even-

ing; and the biſhop of Poſnania put an end to it by declaring, in name of the aſſembly, that Staniſlaus was elected king of Poland. They all threw up their hats into the air, and the ſhouts of acclamation ſtifled the cries of the oppoſers. It was of no ſervice to the cardinal-primate, or to the others who had reſolved to continue neuter, that they had abſented themſelves from the election; they were all obliged next day to come and do homage to the new king: but the greateſt mortification to which they were ſubjected was their being compelled to follow him to the king of Sweden's quarters. Charles paid the ſovereign he had made all the honours due to a king of Poland; and, to add the greater weight to his new dignity, he furniſhed him with a conſiderable ſum of money, and a ſufficient number of troops.

Immediately after this, Charles XII. departed from Warſaw, in order to finiſh the conqueſt of Poland. He had ordered his army to rendezvous before Leopold, the capital of the great palatinate of Ruſſia, a place important in itſelf, and ſtill more ſo on account of the riches which it contained. It was ſuppoſed it would hold out for fifteen days, by means of the fortifications with which Auguſtus had ſtrengthened it. The conqueror ſat down before it on the 5th of September, and next day took it by aſſault. All thoſe who preſumed to make reſiſtance were put to the ſword. The victorious troops, though maſters of the city, did not break their ranks to go a-pillaging, notwithſtanding the immenſe treaſures that were ſaid to be concealed in Leopold. They drew up in order of battle in the great ſquare; where the remaining part of the garriſon came and ſurrendered

rendered themſelves priſoners of war. The king publiſhed his orders by ſound of trumpet, commanding, under pain of death, all the inhabitants, who had any effects belonging to Auguſtus or his adherents, to produce them before night. The meaſures he took were ſo wiſely concerted, that few ventured to diſobey; and accordingly four hundred cheſts of gold and ſilver coin, of plate and other valuable effects, were brought to his majeſty.

The beginning of Staniſlaus's reign was diſtinguiſhed by an event of a very different nature. Some buſineſs, which abſolutely required his preſence, had obliged him to remain at Warſaw. He had with him his mother, his wife, and his two daughters. The cardinal-primate, the biſhop of Poſnania, and ſome grandees of Poland, compoſed his new court. It was guarded by ſix thouſand Poles, of the army of the crown, who had lately entered into his ſervice, but whoſe fidelity had not yet been put to the trial. General Hoorn, governor of the town, had not above fifteen hundred Swedes. The citizens of Warſaw were in a profound tranquillity; and Staniſlaus propoſed ſetting out in a few days for the conqueſt of Leopold; when, all on a ſudden, he was informed that a numerous army was approaching the city. This was king Auguſtus, who, by a freſh effort, and by one of the moſt dexterous marches that ever general made, had eluded the king of Sweden, and was now coming with twenty thouſand men to fall upon Warſaw, and carry off his rival.

Warſaw was unfortified; the Poliſh troops who defended it were not to be relied on; Auguſtus held a correſpondence with ſome of the citizens; ſo that, had Staniſlaus remained in it, he muſt cer-

certainly have been ruined. He ſent back his family into Poſnania, under a guard of Poliſh troops in whom he could moſt confide. In this confuſion he thought he had loſt his ſecond daughter, who was about a year old, and who had been carried by her nurſe into a neighbouring village, where ſhe was ſoon after found in a manger; as Staniſlaus himſelf hath ſince informed me. This is the ſame child whom fortune, after a variety of the moſt ſurpriſing viciſſitudes, at laſt made queen of France. Several gentlemen took different roads. The new king immediately ſet out for the camp of Charles XII. learning thus betimes to ſuffer diſgrace, and forced to quit his capital ſix weeks after he had been advanced to the ſovereignty.

Auguſtus entered the capital like a provoked and victorious ſovereign. The inhabitants, already fleeced by the king of Sweden, were entirely ruined by Auguſtus. The cardinal's palace, and all the houſes of the confederate lords, with all their effects both in town and country, were given to plunder. What was moſt extraordinary in this ſudden revolution, the pope's nuncio who attended Auguſtus demanded in name of his maſter, that the biſhop of Poſnania ſhould be delivered into his hands, as ſubject to the juriſdiction of the court of Rome, both as a biſhop and as the favourer of a prince who had been advanced to the throne by the arms of a Lutheran.

The court of Rome, which hath always been endeavouring to encreaſe its temporal power by means of the ſpiritual, had, long before this, eſtabliſhed a kind of juriſdiction in Poland, at the head of which was the pope's nuncio. Its miniſters never failed to avail themſelves of every favourable opportunity to extend their power, which

is revered by the multitude, but always conteſted by men of ſenſe. They claimed a right of judging in all eccleſiaſtical cauſes; and in times of trouble had uſurped ſeveral other privileges, in which they maintained themſelves till about the year 1728, when theſe abuſes were corrected; abuſes which are never reformed till they are become abſolutely intolerable.

Auguſtus, glad of an opportunity of puniſhing the biſhop of Poſnania in a decent manner, and willing to gratify the court of Rome, whoſe pretenſions, however, he would have oppoſed on any other occaſion, delivered the Poliſh prelate into the hands of the nuncio. The biſhop, after having ſeen his houſe pillaged, was carried by the ſoldiers to the lodgings of the Italian miniſter, and from thence ſent into Saxony, where he ended his days. Count Hoorn bore the continual fire of the enemy in the caſtle, where he was ſhut up, till at laſt the place being no longer tenable, he ſurrendered himſelf with his fifteen hundred Swedes. This was the firſt advantage which Auguſtus gained amidſt the torrent of his bad fortune, over the victorious arms of his enemy.

This laſt effort was the blaze of a fire that was juſt going out. His troops, which had been aſſembled in haſte, conſiſted either of Poles, ready to forſake him on the firſt diſgrace, or of Saxon recruits, who had never ſeen a campaign; or of vagabond Coſſacks, more fit to diſtreſs the conquered than to conquer: and all of them trembled at the bare mention of the king of Sweden's name.

That conqueror, accompanied by Staniſlaus, went in queſt of his enemy, at the head of his beſt troops. The Saxon army fled every where

before

before him. The towns for thirty miles round ſent him the keys of their gates. Not a day paſſed that was not diſtinguiſhed by ſome advantage. Succeſs began to grow too familiar to Charles. He ſaid it was rather like hunting than fighting, and complained that he was not obliged to purchaſe a victory on harder terms.

Auguſtus gave the command of his army, for ſome time, to count Schullemburg, a very able general, and who had need of all his experience at the head of diſpirited troops. He was more anxious to preſerve his maſter's troops than to conquer. He acted by ſtratagem, and the two kings with vigour. He ſtole ſome marches upon them, took poſſeſſion of ſome advantageous poſts, ſacrificed a few horſe in order to give his infantry time to retire; and thus, by a glorious retreat, ſaved his troops in the face of an enemy, in contending with whom it was impoſſible, at that time, to acquire any other kind of glory.

He was ſcarce arrived in the palatinate of Poſnania, when he learned that the two kings, who, he imagined were at the diſtance of fifty leagues, had marched theſe fifty leagues in nine hours. He had only eight thouſand foot, and a thouſand horſe; and yet with his handful of men, he was obliged to make head againſt a ſuperior army, againſt the name of the king of Sweden, and againſt that terror with which ſo many defeats had naturally inſpired the Saxons. He had always affirmed, contrary to the opinion of the German generals, that infantry were able to reſiſt cavalry in open field, even without the aſſiſtance of chevaux de frize, and he this day ventured to put the matter to the teſt of experience, againſt a victorious cavalry commanded by two kings, and by the

the beſt Swediſh generals. He took poſſeſſion of ſuch an advantageous poſt, that he could not poſſibly be ſurrounded. The ſoldiers of the firſt rank, armed with pikes and fuſees, bent one knee upon the ground, and ſtanding very cloſe together, preſented to the enemy's horſe a kind of pointed rampart with pikes and bayonets: the ſecond rank, inclining a little on the ſhoulders of the firſt, fired over their heads; and the third, ſtanding upright, fired at the ſame time, from behind the other two. The Swedes, with their uſual impetuoſity, ruſhed upon the Saxons, who waited the aſſault without flinching: the diſcharge of the muſkets, and the points of the pikes and bayonets maddened the horſes, and made them rear inſtead of advancing. By theſe means the attack of the Swedes was rendered diſorderly; and the Saxons defended themſelves by keeping their ranks.

Though he had received five wounds, he drew up his men in an oblong ſquare, and in this form made an orderly retreat about midnight towards the ſmall town of Gurau, three leagues diſtant from the field of battle. But he had hardly begun to breathe in this place, when the two kings ſuddenly appeared at his heels.

Beyond Gurau, towards the river Oder, lay a thick wood, by marching through which the Saxon general ſaved his fatigued infantry. The Swedes, who were not to be checked by ſuch a trivial interruption, purſued them even through the wood, advancing with great difficulty through paths hardly paſſable by foot travellers; and the Saxons had not croſſed the wood above five hours before the Swediſh horſe. On the other ſide of the wood runs the river Parts, hard by a village

called

called Rutſen. Schullemburg had taken care to ſend orders for having the boats in readineſs; and he now tranſported his troops, which were diminiſhed by one half. Charles arrived the very moment that Schullemburg reached the oppoſite bank. Never conqueror purſued his enemy with greater celerity. The reputation of Schullemburg depended upon his eſcaping from the king of Sweden: the king, on the other hand, thought his glory concerned in taking Schullemburg, and the remains of his army. He loſt not a moment, but immediately cauſed his cavalry to croſs at a ford. And thus the Saxons found themſelves ſhut up between the river of Parts, and the greater river of Oder, which takes its riſe in Sileſia, and at this place is very deep and rapid.

Though the deſtruction of Schullemburg ſeemed to be inevitable, yet with the loſs of a few ſoldiers he paſſed the Oder in the night. Thus he ſaved his army, and Charles could not help ſaying, "Schullemburg has conquered us to-day."

This is the ſame Schullemburg, who was afterwards general of the Venetians, and to whom the republic erected a ſtatue in Corfu, for having defended that bulwark of Italy againſt the Turks. Such honours are conferred by republicks only: kings give nothing but rewards.

But what contributed ſo much to the glory of Schullemburg was of no ſervice to king Auguſtus, who once more abandoned Poland to his enemies; retired into Saxony, and inſtantly repaired the fortifications of Dreſden, being already afraid, and not without reaſon, for the capital of his hereditary dominions.

Charles XII. now beheld Poland reduced to *ſubjection*. His generals, after his example, had beat

beat in Courland ſeveral ſmall bodies of the Muſcovites, who ever ſince the battle of Narva had appeared only in ſmall companies, and made war in thoſe parts like the vagrant Tartars, who pillage, fly, and then re-appear in order to fly again.

Wherever the Swedes came, they thought themſelves ſure of victory, when they were only twenty to an hundred. At this happy conjuncture, Staniſlaus prepared for his coronation. Fortune to which he owed his election at Warſaw, and his expulſion from thence, now recalled him thither, amidſt the acclamations of a numerous nobility, attached to him by the fate of war. A diet was immediately convoked, where all obſtacles were removed, except ſuch as were raiſed by the court of Rome, which alone endeavoured to traverſe the project.

It was natural for Rome to declare in favour of Auguſtus, who from a proteſtant had become a catholic, in order to mount the throne of Poland, and to oppoſe Staniſlaus, who had been placed upon the ſame throne by the great enemy of the catholic religion. Clement XI. the then pope, ſent briefs to all the prelates of Poland, and particularly to the cardinal-primate, threatning them with excommunication, if they preſumed to aſſiſt at the conſecration of Staniſlaus, or attempt any thing againſt the rights of Auguſtus.

Should theſe briefs be delivered to the biſhops, who were at Warſaw, it was believed that ſome of them would be weak enough to obey them; and that the majority would avail themſelves of this pretext to become more troubleſome in proportion as they were more neceſſary. Every poſſible precaution was therefore taken to prevent theſe

letters

letters of the pope from being admitted into War ſaw. But a Franciſcan received the briefs ſecretly, promiſing to deliver them into the biſhops own hands. He preſently gave one to the ſuffragan of Chelm. This prelate, who was ſtrongly attached to Staniſlaus, carried it to the king unopened. The king ſent for the monk, and aſked him how he durſt undertake to deliver a writing of that nature. The Franciſcan anſwered, that he did it by order of his general. Staniſlaus deſired him for the future to pay a greater regard to the orders of his king than to thoſe of the general of the Franciſcans, and forthwith baniſhed him the city.

The ſame day a placart was publiſhed by the king of Sweden, forbidding, under the moſt ſevere penalties, all the eccleſiaſtics in Warſaw, both ſecular and regular, to interfere in affairs of ſtate. And for the greater ſecurity, he cauſed guards to be placed at the gates of all the prelates, and forbad any ſtranger to enter the city. Theſe little ſeverities he took upon himſelf, in order to prevent any rupture between the clergy and Staniſlaus, at his acceſſion to the throne. He ſaid he relaxed himſelf from the fatigues of war, in giving a check to the intrigues of the Romiſh court; and that he muſt fight againſt it with paper, whereas he was obliged to attack other ſovereigns with real arms.

The cardinal-primate was ſollicited by Charles and Staniſlaus to come and perform the ceremony of the coronation. He did not think himſelf obliged to leave Dantzick, and to conſecrate a king who had been choſen againſt his will. But as it was his maxim never to do any thing without a *pretext*, he reſolved to provide a lawful excuſe for

for his refuſal. He cauſed the pope's brief to be fixed in the night time to the gate of his own houſe. The magiſtrates of Dantzick took fire at this indignity, and cauſed ſtrict ſearch to be made for the authors, who nevertheleſs could not be found. The primate affected to be highly incenſed, but in reality was very well pleaſed, as it furniſhed him with a reaſon for refuſing to conſecrate the new king; and thus at one and the ſame time he kept fair with Charles XII. Auguſtus, Staniſlaus, and the pope. He died a few days after, leaving his country involved in confuſion, and having reaped no other fruit from all his intrigues, but that of embroiling himſelf with the three kings, Charles, Auguſtus, and Staniſlaus; and with the republic and the pope, who had ordered him to repair to Rome, to give an account of his conduct. But as even politicians are ſometimes touched with remorſe in their laſt moments, he wrote to king Auguſtus on his death-bed, and begged his pardon.

The conſecration was performed with equal tranquillity and magnificence, on the fourth of October 1705, in the city of Warſaw, notwithſtanding the uſual cuſtom of the Poles, of crowning their kings at Cracow. Staniſlaus Leczinſky and his wife Charlotta Opalinſka, were conſecrated king and queen of Poland, by the hands of the archbiſhop of Leopold, aſſiſted by ſeveral other prelates. Charles XII. ſaw the ceremony incognito, the only advantage he reaped from his conqueſts.

While he was thus giving a king to the conquered Poles, and Denmark durſt not preſume to create him any diſturbances; while the king of Pruſſia courted his friendſhip, and Auguſtus was re-

retired to his hereditary dominions, the czar was every day becoming more and more formidable. Though he had given but little aſſiſtance to Auguſtus in Poland, he had nevertheleſs made powerful diverſions in Ingria.

He now began to grow not only a good ſoldier himſelf, but likewiſe inſtructed his ſubjects in the art of war. Diſcipline was eſtabliſhed among his troops. He had good engineers, and well ſerved artillery, and ſeveral good officers; and he underſtood the great ſecret of ſubſiſting his armies. Some of his generals had learned both how to fight, and as occaſion required, to decline fighting; and he had beſides formed a reſpectable navy, capable of making head againſt the Swedes in the Baltick.

Strengthened by all theſe advantages, which were entirely owing to his own genius, and by the abſence of the king of Sweden, he took Narva by aſſault, on the twenty-firſt of Auguſt 1704, after a regular ſiege, during which he had prevented its receiving any ſuccours either by ſea or land. The ſoldiers were no ſooner maſters of the city than they ran to pillage, and abandoned themſelves to the moſt enormous barbarities. The czar flew from place to place, to ſtop the diſorder and carnage. He ſnatched the women from the hands of the ſoldiers, who, after having raviſhed them, were going to cut their throats. He was even obliged to kill ſome Muſcovites who did not obey his orders. They ſtill ſhew you, in the town houſe of Narva, the table upon which he laid his ſword as he entered, and repeat the words which he ſpoke to the citizens, who were there aſſembled. "It is not with the blood of the inhabitants that this ſword is ſtained, but with that of the

the Muſcovites, which I have ſhed to ſave your lives."

Had the czar always obſerved theſe humane maxims, he would have been the greateſt man in the world. He aſpired to a nobler character than that of a deſtroyer of towns. He was, at that time, laying the foundation of a city not far from Narva, in the middle of his new conqueſts. This was the city of Peterſburg, which he afterwards made the place of his reſidence, and the center of his trade. It is ſituated between Finland and Ingria, in a marſhy iſland, around which the Neva divides itſelf into ſeveral branches, before it falls into the gulph of Finland. With his own hands he drew the plan of the city, the fortreſs, and the harbour, the keys which embelliſhed it, and the forts which defended its entrance. This deſert and uncultivated iſland, which during the ſhort ſummer in thoſe climates, was only a heap of mud, and in winter a frozen pool, into which there was no entry by land but through pathleſs foreſts and deep moraſſes, and which had hitherto been the haunt of wolves and bears, was filled in 1703, with above three hundred thouſand men, whom the czar had brought thither from his other dominions. The peaſants of the kingdom of Aſtracan, and thoſe who inhabit the frontiers of China, were tranſported to Peterſburg. He was obliged to clear foreſts, to make roads, to drain marſhes, and to raiſe banks, before he could lay the foundation of the city. The whole was a force put upon nature. The czar was determined to people a country, which did not ſeem deſigned for the habitation of men. Neither the inundation which razed his works, nor the ſterility of the ſoil, nor the ignorance of the workmen,

men, nor even the mortality which carried off about two hundred thouſand men in the beginning of the undertaking, could divert him from his firm reſolution. The town was founded amidſt the obſtacles which nature, the genius of the people, and an unſucceſsful war, conſpired to raiſe againſt it. Peterſburg was become a city in 1705, and its harbour was filled with ſhips. The emperor, by a proper diſtribution of favours, drew many ſtrangers thither, beſtowing lands upon ſome, houſes upon others, and encouraging all the artiſts that came to civilize this barbarous climate. Above all, he had rendered it proof againſt the utmoſt efforts of his enemies. The Swediſh generals, who frequently beat his troops in every other quarter, were never able to hurt his infant colony. It enjoyed a profound tranquillity in the midſt of the war, with which it was ſurrounded.

While the czar was thus creating, as it were, new dominions to himſelf, he ſtill held out a helping hand to Auguſtus, who was loſing his. He perſuaded him, by means of general Patkul, who had lately entered into the ſervice of Muſcovy, and was then the czar's ambaſſador in Saxony, to come to Grodno to confer with him once more on the unhappy ſituation of his affairs. Thither Auguſtus repaired with ſome troops, and accompanied by general Schullemburg, who was now become famous over all the north for his paſſage croſs the Oder, and in whom the king repoſed his laſt hopes. The czar arrived at the ſame place, followed by an army of ſeventy thouſand men. The two monarchs concerted new meaſures for carrying on the war. Auguſtus being now dethroned, was no longer afraid

of provoking the Poles, by abandoning their country to the Muſcovite troops. It was reſolved that the army of the czar ſhould be divided into ſeveral bodies, to check the progreſs of the king of Sweden at every ſtep. It was at this time that Auguſtus renewed the order of the white eagle, a weak expedient for attaching to his intereſt ſome Poliſh lords, who were more deſirous of real advantages than of an empty honour, which becomes ridiculous when it is held of a prince poſſeſſed of nothing but the name of king. The conference of the two kings ended in a very extraordinary manner. The czar departed ſuddenly, left his troops to his ally, and went to extinguiſh a rebellion with which he was threatened in Aſtracan. Immediately after his departure, Auguſtus ordered Patkul to be arreſted at Dreſden. All Europe was ſurpriſed at his conduct, in preſuming, contrary to the law of nations, and even in appearance to his own intereſt, to impriſon the ambaſſador of the only prince from whom he could expect any aſſiſtance.

The ſecret ſpring of this tranſaction, as I had the honour to be informed from marſhal Saxe, ſon to king Auguſtus, was as follows: Patkul, proſcribed in Sweden for having defended the privileges of Livonia, his native country, had been general to Auguſtus; but his high and lofty ſpirit being unable to brook the haughty behaviour of general Fleming, the king's favourite, more imperious and lofty than himſelf, he had paſſed into the ſervice of the czar, whoſe general he then was, and his ambaſſador at the court of Auguſtus. Endowed, as he was, with a penetrating genius, he had obſerved that Fleming and the chancellor of Saxony intended to purchaſe a

peace from the king of Sweden at any price. He forthwith formed a deſign to prevent them, and to effect an accommodation between the czar and Sweden. The chancellor diſcovered his project, and obtained leave to ſeize him. Auguſtus told the czar that Patkul was a perfidious wretch, and would betray them both. And yet he was no further culpable than in having ſerved his new maſter too well; but an ill-timed piece of ſervice frequently meets with the puniſhment due to treaſon.

Mean while, the ſixty thouſand Ruſſians, divided into ſeveral ſmall bodies, were burning and ravaging the lands of Staniſlaus' adherents, on one ſide; and on the other, Schullemburg was advancing with freſh troops. The fortune of the Swedes diſperſed theſe two armies in leſs than two months. Charles XII. and Staniſlaus attacked the ſeparate bodies of the Muſcovites, one after another, and with ſo much vigour and diſpatch, that one Muſcovite general was beat before he heard of the defeat of his companion.

Nothing could ſtop the progreſs of the conqueror. If a river intervened between him and the enemy, Charles XII. and his Swedes ſwam acroſs it. A party of Swedes took the baggage of Auguſtus, in which were found two hundred thouſand crowns of ſilver. Staniſlaus ſeized eight hundred thouſand ducats belonging to prince Menzikoff, the Ruſſian general. Charles, at the head of his cavalry, marched thirty leagues in four and twenty hours; every ſoldier leading a horſe in his hand to mount when his own was weary. The Muſcovites, ſtruck with terror, and reduced to a ſmall number, fled in diſorder beyond the Boriſthenes.

While

While Charles was driving the Muſcovites before him into the heart of Lithuania, Schullemburg at laſt repaſſed the Oder, and came at the head of twenty thouſand men to give battle to the grand marſhal, Renſchild, who was reckoned the beſt general that Charles had, and was called the Parmenio of this Alexander of the North. Theſe two illuſtrious generals, who ſeemed to ſhare the fate of their maſters, met near Punitz, in a place called Travenſtad, a ſpot already fatal to the troops of Auguſtus. Renſchild had only thirteen battalions, and two and twenty ſquadrons, amounting in all to about ten thouſand men. Schullemburg had double that number. It is worthy of remark, that there was in his army a body of ſix or ſeven thouſand Muſcovites, who had been long diſciplined, and were eſteemed good ſoldiers. The battle of Travenſtad was fought on the twelfth of February 1706. But this very general Schullemburg, who, with four and twenty thouſand men, had, in ſome meaſure, baffled the good fortune of the king of Sweden, ſunk under that of general Renſchild. The combat did not laſt a quarter of an hour; the Saxons made no reſiſtance; the Muſcovites threw down their arms the moment they ſaw the Swedes. The panic was ſo ſudden, and the confuſion ſo great, that the conquerors found on the field of battle ſeven thouſand loaded fuſees, which the enemy had thrown away without firing. No defeat was ever more ſudden, more complete, or more diſgraceful; and yet no general ever made a finer diſpoſition of his troops than Schullemburg, even by the confeſſion of the Saxon and Swediſh generals themſelves, who this day ſaw how little human prudence is able to command events.

Among the priſoners there was an entire regiment of Frenchmen. Theſe unhappy men had been taken by the Saxons in 1704, at the famous battle of Hochſtet, ſo fatal to the grandeur of Lewis XIV. They had afterwards paſſed into the ſervice of Auguſtus, who had formed them into a regiment of dragoons, the command of which he had given to a Frenchmen of the family of Joyeuſe. The colonel was killed at the firſt, or rather the only charge of the Swedes; and the whole regiment were made priſoners of war. That very day the French begged to be admitted into the ſervice of Charles XII. into which they were accordingly received by a ſtrange caprice of fortune, which reſerved them once more to change their maſter and their conqueror.

With regard to the Muſcovites, they begged their lives on their knees; but the Swedes cruelly put them to death above ſix hours after the battle, in order to revenge on them the outrages which their countrymen had committed, and to rid their hands of thoſe priſoners whom they did not know how to diſpoſe of.

Auguſtus now ſaw himſelf deprived of all reſources. He had nothing left but Cracow, where he was ſhut up with two regiments of Muſcovites, two of Saxons, and ſome troops of the army of the crown, by whom he was even afraid of being delivered up to the conqueror: but his misfortunes were completed when he heard that Charles XII. had at laſt entered Saxony, on the firſt of September 1706.

He had marched through Sileſia, without ſo much as deigning to apprize the court of Vienna of his motions. Germany was ſtruck with conſternation. The diet of Ratiſbon, which repreſents the

the empire, and whoſe reſolutions are frequently as ineffectual as they are ſolemn, declared the king of Sweden an enemy of the empire, if he ſhould paſs the Oder with his army: a ſtep which only determined him to march the ſooner into Germany.

At his approach the villages were deſerted, and the inhabitants fled on all ſides. Charles behaved in the ſame manner as he had done at Copenhagen: he cauſed a declaration to be fixed up in all public places, importing, That his only intention in coming was to procure peace; that all thoſe who ſhould return home and pay the contributions he demanded, ſhould be treated as his own ſubjects, and the reſt puniſhed without mercy. This declaration from a prince who was never known to break his word, made all thoſe who had fled for fear, to return home. He pitched his camp at Altranſtad, near the plain of Lutzen, a field famous for the victory and death of Guſtavus Adolphus. He went to ſee the place where that great man fell. When he reached the ſpot, "I have endeavoured (ſaid he) to live like him, God, perhaps, will one day grant me as glorious a death."

From this camp, he ſent orders to the ſtates of Saxony to aſſemble, and to tranſmit to him, without delay, the regiſters of the electoral finances. As ſoon as he had got them in his power, and was exactly informed how much Saxony could ſupply, he taxed it at ſix hundred twenty five thouſand rix-dollars a-month. Over and above this contribution, the Saxons were obliged to furniſh every Swediſh ſoldier with two pounds of fleſh, two pounds of bread, two pots of beer, and fourpence a-day, with forage for the horſe. The con-

tributions being thus regulated, the king eſtabliſhed a new police, to protect the Saxons from the inſults of his ſoldiers. In all the towns where he placed garriſons, he ordered the inn-keepers, in whoſe houſes the ſoldiers were quartered, to deliver every month certificates of their behaviour, without which the ſoldiers were to have no pay. Beſides, inſpectors were appointed, who, once in every fifteen days, went from houſe to houſe to make inquiry whether the Swedes had committed any outrage; in which caſe, care was taken to indemnify the inn-keepers, and to puniſh the delinquents.

It is well known under what ſevere diſcipline the troops of Charles XII. were kept; that they never plundered the towns which they took by aſſault till they had received permiſſion; and that they even plundered in a regular manner, and left off at the firſt ſignal. The Swedes pique themſelves to this day on the ſtrict diſcipline which they obſerved in Saxony; and yet the Saxons complain of the terrible ravages they committed; contradictions which it would be impoſſible to reconcile, did not we know in what very different lights the ſame objects appear to different men. It could hardly happen but that the conquerors muſt have ſometimes abuſed their rights; and the conquered have taken the ſlighteſt injuries for the moſt enormous outrages. One day, as the king was taking the air on horſeback, in the neighbourhood of Leipſick, a Saxon peaſant threw himſelf at his feet, begging he would do him juſtice on a grenadier, who had juſt taken from him
: was deſigned for his family's dinner. The
ordered the ſoldier to be brought before him;
is it true, (ſays he with a ſtern countenance)

nance) that you have robbed this man?" "Sir, (ſays the ſoldier) I have not done him ſo much harm as you have done to his maſter: you have taken a kingdom from him, and I have only taken a turkey from this fellow." The king gave the peaſant ten ducats with his own hand, and pardoned the ſoldier for the wit and boldneſs of the reply; adding, "Remember, friend, that, if I have taken a kingdom from Auguſtus, I have kept nothing to myſelf."

The great fair of Leipſick was held as uſual. The merchants came thither in perfect ſecurity. Not one Swediſh ſoldier was to be ſeen in the fair. One would have ſaid that the army of the king of Sweden was in Saxony for no other reaſon than to watch over the ſafety of the country. He commanded throughout all the electorate with a power as abſolute, and a tranquillity as profound, as if he had been in Stockholm.

Auguſtus wandering up and down Poland, and deprived at once of his kingdom and electorate, at laſt wrote a letter with his own hand to Charles XII. in which he humbly ſued for peace. This letter he ſent ſecretly by baron d'Imhoff and Mr. Fingſten refendary of the privy council, to which two gentlemen he gave full power, and a blank ſigned: "Go, (ſays he to them) endeavour to procure me reaſonable and chriſtian conditions." He was obliged, however, to conceal theſe overtures, and to decline the mediation of any prince; for, being then in Poland, at the mercy of the Muſcovites, he had reaſon to fear that that dangerous ally, whom he was now going to abandon, would puniſh him for his ſubmiſſion to the conqueror. His two plenipotentiaries came to Charles's camp in the night-time, and had a private au-

dience. The king having read the letter, told them they ſhould have his anſwer in a moment; and accordingly retiring to his cloſet, he wrote as follows:

"I conſent to give peace on the following conditions, in which it muſt not be expected that ever I will make the leaſt alteration.

I. That Auguſtus renounce the crown of Poland for ever; that he acknowledge Staniſlaus as lawful king; and that he promiſe never to remount the throne, not even after the death of Staniſlaus.

II. That he renounce all other treaties, and particularly thoſe he hath made with Muſcovy.

III. That he ſend back to my camp, in an honourable manner, the princes Sobieſki, and all the priſoners he hath taken.

IV. That he deliver into my hands all the deſerters that have entered into his ſervice, and particularly John Patkul; and that he ſtop all proceedings againſt ſuch as have paſſed from his ſervice into mine."

This paper he gave to count Piper, with orders to tranſact the reſt with the plenipotentiaries of Auguſtus. Theſe gentlemen were ſhocked at the cruelty of the propoſals; and uſed all the little arts that men without power can employ, to ſoften, if poſſible, the rigour of the king of Sweden. They had ſeveral conferences with count Piper; but that miniſter anſwered all their arguments with this ſhort reply; "Such is the will of the king my maſter, and he never alters his reſolution."

While theſe negociations were carrying on in Saxony, fortune ſeemed to put Auguſtus in a condition to obtain more honourable terms, and of treating

treating with his conqueror on a more equal footing.

Prince Menzikoff, generaliſſimo of the Muſcovite army, brought into Poland a body of thirty thouſand men, at a time when Auguſtus not only did not deſire their aſſiſtance, but even feared it. He had with him ſome Poliſh and Saxon troops, making in all about ſix thouſand men. Surrounded with this ſmall body by the army of prince Menzikoff, he had every thing to fear, in caſe the negociation ſhould be diſcovered. He ſaw himſelf at once dethroned by his enemy, and in danger of being arreſted by his ally. In this delicate conjuncture, one of the Swediſh generals, named Meyerfeld, at the head of ten thouſand men, appeared at Caliſh, near the palatinate of Poſnania. Prince Menzikoff preſſed Auguſtus to give them battle. The king, who was greatly embarraſſed, delayed the engagement under various pretexts; for though the enemy had but one third of his number, there were four thouſand Swedes in Meyerfeld's army, and that alone was ſufficient to render the event doubtful. To give battle to the Swedes during the negociation, and to loſe it, was, in effect, to deepen the abyſs in which he was already plunged. He therefore reſolved to ſend a truſty ſervant to the general of the enemy, to give him ſome diſtant hints with regard to the peace, and adviſe him to retreat. But this advice produced an effect quite contrary to what he expected. General Meyerfeld thought they were laying a ſnare to intimidate him; and for that reaſon reſolved to hazard a battle.

The Ruſſians, now for the firſt time, conquered the Swedes in a pitched battle. This victory, which Auguſtus gained almoſt againſt his will,

was entire and complete. In the midſt of his bad fortune, he entered triumphant into Warſaw, formerly his flouriſhing capital, but then a diſmantled and ruined town, ready to receive any conqueror, and to acknowledge the ſtrongeſt for king. He was tempted to ſeize upon this moment of proſperity, to go and attack the king of Sweden in Saxony with the Muſcovite army. But when he reflected that Charles XII. was at the head of a Swediſh army, hitherto invincible; that the Ruſſians would abandon him on the firſt intelligence of the treaty he had begun; that his Saxon dominions, already drained of men and money, would be equally ravaged by the Swedes and Muſcovites; that the empire, engaged in a war with France, could afford him no aſſiſtance; and that, in the end, he ſhould be left without dominions, money, or friends; he thought it moſt adviſeable to comply with the terms which the king of Sweden ſhould impoſe. Theſe terms became ſtill more hard when Charles heard that Auguſtus had attacked his troops during the negociation. His reſentment, and the pleaſure of further humbling an enemy who had juſt vanquiſhed his forces, made him inflexible upon all the articles of the treaty. Thus the victory of Auguſtus ſerved only to render his ſituation the more miſerable; a thing which perhaps never happened to any but himſelf.

He had juſt cauſed *Te Deum* to be ſung at Warſaw, when Fingſten, one of his plenipotentiaries, arrived from Saxony with the treaty of peace which deprived him of his crown. Auguſtus heſitated for a little, but at laſt ſigned it; and then ſet out for Saxony, vainly hoping that his preſence would ſoften the king of Sweden, and that

his

his enemy would perhaps remember the ancient alliances of their families, and the common blood that ran in both their veins.

Theſe two princes met for the firſt time in count Piper's tent, at a place called Guterſdorff, without any ceremony. Charles XII. was in jack-boots, with a piece of black taffety tied round his neck inſtead of a cravat: his cloaths, as uſual, were of coarſe blue cloath, with gilt braſs buttons. He had a long ſword by his ſide, which had ſerved him in the battle of Narva, and upon the pummel of which he frequently leaned. The converſation turned wholly upon theſe jack-boots; Charles XII. told Auguſtus that he had not laid them aſide for theſe ſix years paſt, except when he went to bed. Theſe trifles were the only ſubject of diſcourſe between two kings, one of whom had deprived the other of a crown. Auguſtus, eſpecially, ſpoke with an air of complaiſance and ſatisfaction, which princes, and men accuſtomed to the management of great affairs, know how to aſſume amidſt the moſt cruel mortifications. The two kings dined together two ſeveral times. Charles XII. always affected to give Auguſtus the right hand; but, far from mitigating the rigour of his demands, he rendered them ſtill more ſevere. It was certainly a very mortifying thing, for a ſovereign to be forced to deliver up a general officer and a public miniſter. It was ſtill a greater debaſement to be obliged to ſend the jewels and archives of the crown to his ſucceſſor Staniſlaus. But what completed his degradation was his being at laſt compelled to congratulate, on his acceſſion to the throne, the man who was going to uſurp his place. Charles required Auguſtus to write a letter to Staniſlaus. The dethroned king endeavoured to evade

the demand; but Charles inſiſted upon his writing the letter, and he was at laſt obliged to comply. Here follows an exact copy of it, which I have ſeen. It is tranſcribed from the original, which is ſtill in the poſſeſſion of king Staniſlaus.

"SIR and BROTHER,

"We little imagined it would have been neceſſary to enter into a literary correſpondence with your majeſty; nevertheleſs, in order to pleaſe his Swediſh majeſty, and to avoid the ſuſpicion of our being unwilling to gratify his deſire, we hereby congratulate you on your acceſſion to the throne; and wiſh you may find in your native country more faithful ſubjects than we have left there. All the world will do us the juſtice to believe, that we have received nothing but the moſt ungrateful returns for our good offices, and that the greater part of our ſubjects ſeemed to have no other aim than to haſten our ruin. Wiſhing that you may never be expoſed to the like misfortunes, we commit you to the protection of God.

Dreſden, April 8, 1707. Your brother and neighbour, AUGUSTUS, King.

Auguſtus was obliged to give orders to all his magiſtrates no longer to ſtile him king of Poland, and to eraze this title, which he now renounced, out of the public prayers. He was leſs averſe to the releaſing of the Sobieſkies; but the ſacrifice of Patkul was the ſevereſt of all. The czar, on the one hand, loudly demanded him back as his ambaſſador; and on the other, the *king* of Sweden, with the moſt terrible menaces *in caſe of a* refuſal, inſiſted that he ſhould be de-

livered

livered up to him. Patkul was then confined in the caſtle of Konigſtein, in Saxony. Auguſtus thought he might eaſily gratify Charles XII. and ſave his own honour. He ſent his guards to deliver this unhappy man to the Swediſh troops; but he previouſly diſpatched a ſecret order to the governor of Konigſtein, to let his priſoner eſcape. The bad fortune of Patkul defeated the pains that were taken to ſave him. The governor, knowing that Patkul was very rich, had a mind to make him purchaſe his liberty. The priſoner ſtill relying on the law of nations, and informed of the intentions of Auguſtus, refuſed to pay for that which he thought he had a title to obtain for nothing. During this interval, the guards who were commiſſioned to ſeize the priſoner arrived, and immediately delivered him to four Swediſh captains, who carried him forthwith to the general quarters at Altranſtad, where he remained for three months tied to a ſtake, with a heavy iron chain; and from thence was conducted to Caſimir.

Charles XII. forgetting that Patkul was the czar's ambaſſador, and conſidering him only as his own ſubject, ordered a council of war to try him with the utmoſt rigour. He was condemned to be broke alive, and quartered. A chaplain having come to inform him of the fatal ſentence, without acquainting him with the manner in which it was to be executed, Patkul, who had braved death in ſo many battles, finding himſelf ſhut up with a prieſt, and his courage being no longer ſupported by glory or paſſion, the only ſources of human intrepidity, poured out a flood of tears into the chaplain's boſom. He was affianced to a Saxon lady, called Madam d'Einſiedel, a wo-

man

man of birth, of merit, and of beauty, and whom he intended to have married much about the time that he was now condemned to die. He intreated the chaplain to wait upon her, to give her all the conſolation he could, and to aſſure her that he died full of the moſt tender affection for his incomparable miſtreſs. When he was brought to the place of puniſhment, and beheld the wheels and ſtakes prepared for his execution, he fell into convulſions, and threw himſelf into the arms of the miniſter, who embraced him, covered him with his cloak, and wept over him. Then a Swediſh officer read aloud a paper to the following effect:

"This is to declare, that it is the expreſs order of his majeſty, our moſt merciful lord, that this man, who is a traitor to his country, be broke upon the wheel, and quartered, in order to attone for his crimes, and to be an example to others; that every one may beware of treaſon, and faithfully ſerve his king." At the words "moſt merciful prince," Patkul cried out, "What mercy?" and at thoſe of "traitor to his country," "Alas! (ſaid he) I have ſerved it but too well." He received ſixteen blows, and ſuffered the longeſt and moſt excruciating tortures that can be imagined. Thus died the unfortunate John Reinold Patkul, ambaſſador and general of the emperor of Ruſſia.

Thoſe that looked upon him only as a rebel, ſaid that he deſerved death; but thoſe who conſidered him as a Livonian, born in a province that had privileges to defend, and remembered that he had been baniſhed from Livonia for no other reaſon than his having defended thoſe privileges, *called him* a martyr to the liberty of his country.

But all agreed that the title of ambaſſador to the czar ought to have rendered his perſon ſacred. The king of Sweden alone, brought up in the principles of arbitrary power, thought that he had only performed an act of juſtice, whilſt all Europe condemned his cruelty.

His mangled limbs remained expoſed upon gibbets till 1713, when Auguſtus having regained his throne, cauſed theſe teſtimonies of the neceſſity to which he was reduced at Altranſtad to be gathered together. They were brought to Warſaw in a box, and delivered to him in preſence of the French envoy. The king of Poland ſhewing the box to this miniſter, only ſaid, "Theſe are the limbs of Patkul;" without adding any thing, either to blame his conduct or to bewail his memory, and without any one daring to ſpeak on ſo delicate and mournful a ſubject.

About this time, a Livonian called Paikel, an officer in the Saxon troops, who had been taken priſoner in the field, was condemned at Stockholm by a decree of the ſenate; but his ſentence was only to loſe his head. This difference of puniſhments in the ſame caſe, made it but too plain, that Charles, in putting Patkul to ſuch a cruel death, was more anxious to avenge himſelf than to puniſh the criminal. Be that as it will, Paikel, after his condemnation, propoſed to the ſenate to impart to the king the ſecret of making gold, on condition that he ſhould obtain his pardon. He made the experiment in priſon, in preſence of colonel Hamilton and the magiſtrates of the town; and whether he had actually diſcovered ſome uſeful ſecret, or, which is more probable, had only acquired the art of deceiving with a plauſible air, they carried the gold which was found

in the crucible to the mint at Stockholm, and gave the ſenate ſuch a full, and ſeemingly ſuch an important account of the matter, that the queen-dowager, Charles's grandmother, ordered the execution to be ſuſpended till the king ſhould be informed of this uncommon affair, and ſhould ſend his orders accordingly.

The king made anſwer, "That he had refuſed the pardon of the criminal to the entreaties of his friends, and that he would never grant to intereſt what he had denied to friendſhip." This inflexibility had ſomething in it very heroical in a prince, eſpecially as he thought the ſecret practicable. Auguſtus, upon hearing this ſtory, ſaid, "I am not ſurpriſed at the king of Sweden's indifference about the philoſopher's ſtone: he has found it in Saxony."

When the czar was informed of the ſtrange peace which Auguſtus had, notwithſtanding their former treaties, concluded at Altranſtad; and that Patkul, his ambaſſador-plenipotentiary, was delivered up to the king of Sweden, in contempt of the law of nations, he loudly complained of theſe indignities to the courts of Europe. He wrote to the emperor of Germany, to the queen of England, and to the ſtates-general of the United Provinces. He gave the terms of cowardice and treachery to the ſad neceſſity to which Auguſtus had been obliged to ſubmit. He conjured all theſe powers to interpoſe their mediation to procure the reſtoration of his ambaſſador, and to prevent the affront, which, in his perſon, was going to be offered to all crowned heads. He preſſed them, by the motive of honour, not to demean themſelves ſo far as to become guarantees of the treaty of *Altranſtad*; a conceſſion which Charles XII. meant

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to extort from them by his threatening and imperious behaviour. These letters had no other effect than to set the power of the king of Sweden in a stronger light. The emperor, England, and Holland, were then engaged in a destructive war againſt France, and thought it a very unſeaſonable juncture to exaſperate Charles XII. by refuſing the vain ceremony of being guarantees to a treaty. With regard to the unhappy Patkul, there was not a ſingle power that interpoſed its good offices in his behalf; from whence it appears what little confidence a ſubject ought to put in princes; and how much all the European powers at that time ſtood in awe of the king of Sweden.

It was propoſed in the czar's council to retaliate on the Swediſh officers who were priſoners at Moſcow; but the czar would not conſent to a barbarity which would have been attended with fatal conſequences, as there were more Muſcovites priſoners in Sweden, than Swedes in Muſcovy.

He reſolved to take a more advantageous revenge. The main body of his enemy's army lay idle in Saxony. Levenhaupt, the king of Sweden's general, who was left in Poland with about twenty thouſand men, was not able to guard the paſſes into a country without forts, and full of factions. Staniſlaus was in the camp of Charles XII. The emperor of Muſcovy ſeizes this opportunity, and re-enters Poland with above 60,000 men. Theſe he divides into ſeveral bodies, and marches with a flying camp to Leopold, where there was no Swediſh garriſon. All the towns of Poland yield to any one who appears before their gates at the head of an army. He cauſed an aſſembly to be convoked at Leopold, of much the

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ſame nature with that which had dethroned Auguſtus at Warſaw.

At that time Poland had two primates, as well as two kings, the one nominated by Auguſtus, the other by Staniſlaus. The primate nominated by Auguſtus ſummoned the aſſembly of Leopold, to which reſorted all thoſe whom that prince had abandoned by the peace of Altranſtad, and ſuch as were gained by the czar's money. Here it was propoſed to elect a new ſovereign; ſo that Poland was almoſt upon the point of having three kings at once, without being able to ſay which was the real one.

During the conferences at Leopold, the czar, whoſe intereſt was cloſely connected with that of the emperor of Germany, on account of the common dread which they both entertained of the power of the king of Sweden, ſecretly obtained from him a number of German officers; who daily arriving, encreaſed his ſtrength in a conſiderable degree, by bringing along with them diſcipline and experience. Theſe he engaged in his ſervice by ſeveral inſtances of liberality; and the more to encourage his own troops, he gave his picture ſet round with diamonds to all the general officers and colonels who had fought at the battle of Caliſh: the ſubaltern officers had medals of gold, and every private ſoldier a medal of ſilver. Theſe monuments of the victory at Caliſh were all ſtruck in the new city of Peterſburg; where the improvement of the arts kept pace with the deſire of glory and ſpirit of emulation which the czar had infuſed into his troops.

The confuſion, the multiplicity of factions, and the continual ravages prevailing in Poland, hindered the diet of Leopold from coming to any reſolution,

ſolution. The czar transferred it to Lublin; but the change of place did not leſſen the diſorder and perplexity in which the whole nation was involved. The aſſembly contented themſelves with declaring that they neither acknowleged Auguſtus who had abdicated the throne, nor Staniſlaus who had been elected againſt their will; but they were neither ſufficiently united, nor had reſolution enough to nominate another king. During theſe fruitleſs deliberations, the party of the princes Sapieha, that of Oginſky, thoſe who ſecretly adhered to Auguſtus, and the new ſubjects of Staniſlaus, all made war upon one another, and by pillaging each other's eſtates, compleated the ruin of their country. The Swediſh troops, commanded by Levenhaupt, one part of which lay in Livonia, another in Lithuania, and a third in Poland, were daily in purſuit of the Ruſſians, and ſet fire to every thing that oppoſed Staniſlaus. The Ruſſians ruined their friends and foes without diſtinction; and nothing was to be ſeen but towns reduced to aſhes, and wandering troops of Poles, deprived of all their ſubſtance, and deteſting alike their two kings, the czar, and Charles XII.

To quell theſe commotions, and to ſecure the poſſeſſion of the throne, Staniſlaus ſet out from Altranſtad on the fifteenth of July, 1707, accompanied by general Renſchild, and ſixteen Swediſh regiments, and furniſhed with a large ſum of money. He was acknowledged wherever he came. The ſtrict diſcipline of his troops, which made the barbarity of the Muſcovites to be more ſenſibly felt, conciliated the affections of the people. His extreme affability, in proportion as it was better known, reconciled to him almoſt all the different factions; and his money procured him

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the greateſt part of the army of the crown. The czar, apprehenſive of wanting proviſions, in a country which his troops had laid waſte, retired into Lithuania, where he had fixed the general rendezvous of his army, and where he reſolved to eſtabliſh magazines. This retreat left Staniſlaus the undiſturbed ſovereign of the greateſt part of Poland.

The only perſon that gave him any uneaſineſs, was count Sincauſky, grand general of the crown, by the nomination of Auguſtus. This man, who was poſſeſſed of no contemptible talents, and entertained the moſt ambitious views, was at the head of a third party. He neither acknowledged Auguſtus nor Staniſlaus; and after having uſed his utmoſt efforts in order to procure his own election, he contented himſelf with being the head of a party, ſince he could not be king. The troops of the crown, which continued under his command, had no other pay but the liberty of pillaging their fellow ſubjects with impunity. And all thoſe who had either ſuffered, or were apprehenſive of ſuffering, from the rapacity of theſe free booters, ſoon ſubmitted to Staniſlaus, whoſe power was gathering ſtrength every day.

The king of Sweden was then receiving, in his camp at Altranſtad, ambaſſadors from almoſt all the princes in Chriſtendom. Some entreated him to quit the empire, others deſired him to turn his arms againſt the emperor; and it was then the general report, that he intended to join with France, in humbling the houſe of Auſtria. Among theſe ambaſſadors was the famous John duke of Marlborough, ſent by Anne, queen of Great Britain. This man, who never beſieged a town which he did not take, nor fought a battle which he

he did not gain, was at St. James's a perfect courtier, in parliament the head of a party, and in foreign countries the moſt able negociator of his time. He did France as much miſchief by his politics as by his arms. Mr. Fagel, ſecretary of the ſtates general, and a man of great merit, has been heard to ſay, that when the ſtates general had more than once reſolved to oppoſe the ſchemes which the duke was about to lay before them, the duke came, ſpoke to them in French, a language in which he expreſſed himſelf but very indifferently, and brought them all over to his opinion. This account I had from lord Bolingbroke.

In conjunction with prince Eugene, the companion of his victories, and Heinſius, the grand penſionary of Holland, he ſupported the whole weight of the war which the allies waged againſt France. He knew that Charles was incenſed againſt the empire and the emperor; that he was ſecretly ſollicited by the French; and that if this conqueror ſhould eſpouſe the cauſe of Lewis XIV. the allies muſt be entirely ruined,

True it is, Charles had given his word in 1700, that he would not intermeddle in the quarrel between Lewis XIV. and the allies; but the duke of Marlborough could not believe that any prince would be ſo great a ſlave to his word as not to ſacrifice it to his grandeur and intereſt. He therefore ſet out from the Hague with a reſolution to ſound the intentions of the king of Sweden. Mr. Fabricius, who then attended upon Charles XII. aſſured me, that the duke of Marlborough, on his arrival, applied ſecretly, not to count Piper, the prime miniſter, but to baron de Gortz, who now began to ſhare with Piper the confidence of the king. He even went to the quarters of Charles

Charles XII. in the coach of this gentleman *, between whom and the chancellor Piper, together with Robinſon, the Engliſh miniſter, he ſpoke to the king in French. He told him that he ſhould eſteem it a ſingular happineſs, could he have an opportunity of learning under his command ſuch parts of the art of war as he did not yet underſtand. To this polite compliment the king made no return, and ſeemed to forget that it was Marlborough who was ſpeaking to him. He even thought, as I have been credibly informed, that the dreſs of this great man was too fine and coſtly; and that his air had in it too little of a ſoldier. The converſation was tedious and general. Charles XII. ſpeaking in the Swediſh tongue, and Robinſon ſerving as an interpreter. Marlborough, who was never in a haſte to make propoſals; and who, by a long courſe of experience, had learned the art of diving into the real characters of men, and diſcovering the connection between their moſt ſecret thoughts and their actions, geſtures, and diſcourſe, regarded the king with the utmoſt attention. When he ſpoke to him of war in general, he thought he perceived in his majeſty a natural averſion to France; and remarked that he talked with pleaſure of the conqueſts of the allies. He mentioned the czar to him, and obſerved that his eyes always kindled at

* When the duke arrived at the quarters of count Piper, of whom he had demanded an audience, he was told the count was buſy, and obliged to wait half an hour before the Swediſh miniſter came down to receive him. Then the duke alighted from his coach, put on his hat, paſſed the count without ſaluting him, went aſide to the wall, where having ſtaid a few minutes, he returned and accoſted Piper with the moſt polite addreſs.

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the name, notwithſtanding the calmneſs of the converſation. Beſides, he ſaw a map of Muſcovy lying before him upon the table. He wanted no more to convince him, that the real deſign and the ſole ambition of the king of Sweden was to dethrone the czar, as he had already done the king of Poland. He was ſenſible that, if Charles remained in Saxony, it was only to impoſe ſome hard conditions on the emperor of Germany. He knew the emperor would make no reſiſtance, and that thus all diſputes would be eaſily accommodated. He left Charles XII. to follow the bent of his own mind; and ſatisfied with having diſcovered his intentions, he made him no propoſals. Theſe particulars I had from the dutcheſs of Marlborough, his widow, who is ſtill alive *.

As few negociations are finiſhed without money, and as miniſters are ſometimes ſeen to ſell the hatred or favour of their maſters, it was the general opinion throughout all Europe, that the duke of Marlborough would not have ſucceeded ſo well with the king of Sweden, had he not made a handſome preſent to count Piper, whoſe memory ſtill labours under the imputation. For my own part, after having traced this report to its ſource, with all the care and accuracy of which I am maſter, I have found that Piper received a ſmall preſent from the emperor, by the hands of the count de Wratiſlau, with the conſent of his maſter, and not a farthing from the duke of Marlborough. Certain it is, Charles was ſo firmly reſolved to dethrone the emperor of Ruſſia, that

* The author wrote in 1727, ſince which time, as appears from other dates, the work hath undergone ſeveral corrections.

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he aſked no body's advice on that ſubject, nor needed the inſtigation of count Piper to prompt him to wreak his long meditated vengeance on the head of Peter Alexiowitz.

But what vindicates the character of that miniſter beyond all probability and cavil was the honour which, long after this period, was paid to his memory by Charles XII. who having heard that Piper was dead in Ruſſia, cauſed his corps to be tranſported to Stockholm, and gave him a magnificent funeral at his own expence.

The king, who had not as yet experienced any reverſe of fortune, nor even met with any interruption in his victories, thought one year would be ſufficient for dethroning the czar; after which, he imagined he might return in peace and erect himſelf into the arbiter of Europe. But, firſt of all, he reſolved to humble the emperor of Germany.

The baron de Stralheim, the Swediſh envoy at Vienna, had had a quarrel at a public entertainment, with the count de Zobor, chamberlain of the emperor. The latter having refuſed to drink the health of Charles XII. and having bluntly declared that that prince had uſed his maſter ill, Stralheim gave him at once the lie and a box on the ear, and beſides this inſult, boldly demanded a reparation from the imperial court. The emperor, afraid of diſpleaſing the king of Sweden, was obliged to baniſh his ſubject, whom he ought rather to have avenged. Charles, not ſatisfied even with this condeſcenſion, inſiſted that count Zobor ſhould be delivered up to him. The pride of the court of Vienna was forced to ſtoop. The count was put into the hands of the king, who

ſent him back, after having kept him for ſome time as a priſoner at Stettin.

He further demanded, contrary to all the laws of nations, that they ſhould deliver up to him fifteen hundred unhappy Muſcovites, who having eſcaped the fury of his arms, had fled for refuge into the empire. The emperor was obliged to yield even to this unreaſonable demand; and had not the Ruſſian envoy at Vienna given theſe unhappy wretches an opportunity of eſcaping by different roads, they muſt have been delivered into the hands of their enemies.

The third and laſt of his demands was the moſt daring. He declared himſelf the protector of the emperor's proteſtant ſubjects in Sileſia, a province belonging to the houſe of Auſtria, and not to the empire. He inſiſted that the emperor ſhould grant them the liberties and privileges which had been eſtabliſhed by the treaties of Weſtphalia, but which were extinguiſhed, or at leaſt eluded by thoſe of Ryſwick. The emperor, who wanted only to get rid of ſuch a dangerous neighbour, yielded once more, and granted all that he deſired. The Lutherans of Sileſia had above an hundred churches, which the Catholicks were obliged to cede to them by this treaty: but of theſe advantages, which were now procured them by the king of Sweden's good fortune, they were afterwards deprived, when that prince was no longer in a condition to impoſe laws.

The emperor who made theſe forced conceſſions, and complied in every thing with the will of Charles XII. was called Joſeph; and was the eldeſt ſon of Leopold, and brother of Charles VI. who ſucceeded him. The pope's inter-nuncio,

who then reſided at the court of Joſeph, reproached him in very ſevere terms, alledging that it was a moſt ſhameful condeſcenſion for a Catholic emperor, like him, to ſacrifice the intereſt of his own religion to that of hereticks. "You may think yourſelf very happy, replied the emperor, with a ſmile, that the king of Sweden did not propoſe to make me a Lutheran; for if he had, I do not know what I might have done."

The count de Wratiſlau, his ambaſſador with Charles XII. brought to Leipſic the treaty in favour of the Sileſians, ſigned with his maſter's hand; upon which Charles ſaid, he was the emperor's very good friend. He was far from being pleaſed, however, with the court of Rome, which had employed all its arts and intrigues, in order to traverſe his ſcheme. He looked with the utmoſt contempt upon the weakneſs of that court, which, having one half of Europe for its irreconcileable enemy, and placing no confidence in the other, can only ſupport its credit by the dexterity of its negociations; and he therefore reſolved to be revenged on his holineſs. He told the count de Wratiſlau, that the Swedes had formerly ſubdued Rome, and had not degenerated like her. He ſent the pope word, that he would one day redemand the effects which queen Chriſtina had left at Rome. It is hard to ſay how far this young conqueror might have carried his reſentment and his arms, had fortune favoured his deſigns. At that time nothing appeared impoſſible to him. He had even ſent ſeveral officers privately into Aſia and Egypt, to take plans of the towns, and to examine into the ſtrength of thoſe countries. Certain it is, that if ever prince was able to overturn

turn the empire of the Turks and Perſians, and from thence paſs into Italy, it was Charles XII. He was as young as Alexander, as brave, as enterprizing, more indefatigable, more robuſt, and more temperate; and the Swedes perhaps were better ſoldiers than the Macedonians. But ſuch projects, which are called divine when they ſucceed, are regarded only as chimeras when they prove abortive.

At laſt, having removed every difficulty, and accompliſhed all his deſigns; having humbled the emperor, given laws in the empire, protected the Lutheran religion in the midſt of the Catholicks, dethroned one king, crowned another, and rendered himſelf the terror of all the princes around him, he began to prepare for his departure. The pleaſures of Saxony, where he had remained inactive for a whole year, had not made the leaſt alteration in his manner of living. He mounted his horſe thrice a-day, roſe at four in the morning, dreſſed himſelf with his own hands, drank no wine, ſat at table only a quarter of an hour, exerciſed his troops every day, and knew no other pleaſure but that of making Europe tremble.

The Swedes were ſtill uncertain whither their king intended to lead them. They had only ſome ſlight ſuſpicion that he meant to go to Moſcow. A few days before his departure, he ordered the grand marſhal of his houſhold, to give him in writing the route from Leipſick—at that word he pauſed a moment; and, leſt the marſhal ſhould diſcover his project, he added, with a ſmile—to all the capital cities of Europe. The mareſchal brought him a liſt of all theſe

routes, at the head of which he placed, in great letters, "The route from Leipſick to Stockholm." The generality of Swedes were extremely deſirous of returning home; but the king was far from the thoughts of carrying them back to their native country. "Mr. Mareſchal, ſays he, I plainly ſee whither you would lead me; but we ſhall not return to Stockholm ſo ſoon."

The army was already on its march, and was paſſing by Dreſden. Charles was at the head of his men, always riding, as uſual, two or three hundred paces before his guards. All of a ſudden he vaniſhed from their ſight. Some officers advanced at full gallop to ſee where he was. They ran to all parts, but could not find him. In a moment the alarm was ſpread over the whole army. The troops were ordered to halt: the generals aſſembled together, and were already in the utmoſt conſternation. At laſt they learned from a Saxon, who was paſſing by, what was become of the king.

As he was paſſing ſo near Dreſden, he took it into his head to pay a viſit to Auguſtus. He entered the town on horſeback, followed by three or four general officers. The ſentries of the gates aſked them their names? Charles ſaid his name was Carl, and that he was a Draban; and all the reſt took fictitious names. Count Fleming, ſeeing them paſs through the town, had only time to run and inform his maſter. All that could poſſibly be done on ſuch an occaſion immediately preſented itſelf to the mind of that miniſter, who laid it before Auguſtus. But Charles entered the chamber in his boots, before Auguſtus had time to recover from his ſur-

ſurprize. Auguſtus was then ſick, and in his night-gown; but dreſſed himſelf in a hurry. Charles breakfaſted with him, as a traveller who comes to take leave of his friend; and then expreſſed his deſire of viewing the fortifications. During the ſhort time he employed in walking round them, a Livonian who had been condemned in Sweden, and now ſerved in the Saxon army, imagining that he could never find a more favourable opportunity of obtaining his pardon, entreated Auguſtus to aſk it of Charles, being fully convinced that his majeſty would not refuſe ſo ſmall a favour to a prince from whom he had taken a crown, and in whoſe power he now was. Auguſtus readily undertook the charge. He was then at ſome diſtance from the king, and was converſing with Hord, a Swediſh general. "I believe, ſaid he ſmiling, your maſter will not refuſe me." "You do not know him, replied general Hord, he will rather refuſe you here than any where elſe." Auguſtus however did not fail to prefer the petition in very preſſing terms; and Charles refuſed it in ſuch a manner as to prevent a repetition of the requeſt. After having paſſed ſome hours in this ſtrange viſit, he embraced Auguſtus, and departed. Upon rejoining his army, he found all his generals ſtill in conſternation. They told him they had determined to beſiege Dreſden, in caſe his majeſty had been detained a priſoner. "Right, ſaid the king, they durſt not." Next day, upon hearing the news that Auguſtus held an extraordinary council at Dreſden: "You ſee, ſaid baron Straiheim, they are deliberating upon what they ſhould have done yeſterday."

A few days after Renſchild, coming to wait upon the king, expreſſed his ſurprize at this unaccountable viſit to Auguſtus. "I confided, ſaid Charles, in my good fortune; but I have ſeen the moment that might have proved prejudicial to me. Fleming had no mind that I ſhould leave Dreſden ſo ſoon."

THE

THE

HISTORY

OF

CHARLES XII.

KING of SWEDEN.

BOOK IV.

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CHARLES at laſt took leave of Saxony, in September 1707, followed by an army of forty-three thouſand men, formerly covered with ſteel, but now ſhining with gold and ſilver, and enriched with the ſpoils of Poland and Saxony. Every ſoldier carried with him fifty crowns in ready money. Not only were all the regiments complete, but in every company there were ſeveral ſupernumeraries. Beſides this army, Count Levenhaupt, one of his beſt generals, waited for him in Poland with twenty thouſand men. He had another army of fifteen thouſand in Finland; and

freſh recruits were coming to him from Sweden. With all theſe forces it was not doubted but that he would eaſily dethrone the czar.

That emperor was then in Lithuania, endeavouring to reanimate a party which Auguſtus ſeemed to have abandoned. His troops, divided into ſeveral bodies, fled on all ſides at the firſt report of the king of Sweden's approach. He himſelf had enjoined his generals never to wait for the conqueror with unequal forces; and he was punctually obeyed.

The king of Sweden, in the midſt of his victorious march, received an ambaſſador from the Turks. The ambaſſador had his audience in count Piper's quarters; for it was always in that miniſter's tent that ceremonies of pomp were performed. On theſe occaſions he ſupported the dignity of his maſter, by an appearance which had in it ſomething magnificent; and the king, who was always worſe lodged, worſe ſerved, and more plainly dreſſed than the meaneſt officer in his army, was wont to ſay, that his palace was Piper's quarters. The Turkiſh ambaſſador preſented Charles with an hundred Swediſh ſoldiers, who having been taken by the Calmucks, and ſold in Turky, had been purchaſed by the grand ſeignior, and ſent back by that emperor as the moſt acceptable preſent he could make to his majeſty; not that the Ottoman pride condeſcended to pay homage to the glory of Charles XII. but becauſe the ſultan, the natural enemy of the Ruſſian and German emperors, was willing to fortify himſelf againſt them by the friendſhip of Sweden and the alliance of Poland. The ambaſſador complimented Staniſlaus upon his acceſſion to the throne; ſo that this king was acknowledged by Germany, France,

France, England, Spain, and Turky. There remained only the pope, who, before he would acknowledge him, reſolved to wait till time ſhould have ſettled on his head that crown of which a reverſe of fortune might eaſily deprive it.

Charles had no ſooner given audience to the ambaſſador of the Ottoman Porte, than he went in purſuit of the Muſcovites. The Ruſſians, in the courſe of the war, had quitted Poland and returned to it above twenty different times. That country, which is open on all ſides, and has no places of ſtrength to cut off the retreat of an army, gave the Muſcovites an opportunity of ſometimes reviſiting the very ſpot where they had formerly been beat, and even of penetrating as far into the heart of the kingdom as the conqueror himſelf. While Charles remained in Saxony, the czar had advanced as far as Leopold, ſituated at the ſouthern extremity of Poland. Charles was then at Grodno in Lithuania, an hundred leagues to the northward of Leopold.

He left Staniſlaus in Poland to defend his new kingdom, with the aſſiſtance of ten thouſand Swedes and that of his own ſubjects, againſt all his enemies, both foreign and domeſtic. He then put himſelf at the head of his cavalry, and marched amidſt froſt and ſnow to Grodno, in the month of January 1708.

He had already paſſed the Niemen, about two leagues from the town; and the czar as yet knew nothing of his march. Upon the firſt news of the approach of the Swediſh army, the czar quits the town by the north gate, and Charles enters it by the ſouth. Charles had only ſix hundred of his guards with him; the reſt not being able to keep pace with his rapid march. The czar fled with

above two thouſand men, from an apprehenſion that a whole army was entering Grodno. That very day he was informed by a Poliſh deſerter, that he had abandoned the place to no more than ſix hundred men, and that the main body of the army was ſtill at the diſtance of five leagues. He loſt no time: he detached fifteen hundred horſe, of his own troops in the evening, to ſurpriſe the king of Sweden in the town. This detachment, under favour of the darkneſs, arrived undiſcovered at the firſt Swediſh guard, which, tho' conſiſting only of thirty men, ſuſtained, for half a quarter of an hour, the efforts of the whole fifteen hundred. The king, who happened to be at the other end of the town, flew to their aſſiſtance with the reſt of his ſix hundred men; upon which the Ruſſians fled with precipitation. In a ſhort time his army arrived, and he then ſet out in purſuit of the enemy. All the corps of the Ruſſian army, diſperſed through Lithuania, retired haſtily into the palatinate of Minſky, near the frontiers of Muſcovy, where their general rendezvous was appointed. The Swedes, who were likewiſe divided into ſeveral bodies, continued to purſue the enemy for more than thirty leagues. The fugitives and the purſuers made forced marches almoſt every day, though in the middle of winter. For a long time paſt all ſeaſons of the year were become indifferent to the Swedes and Ruſſians; and the only difference between them now aroſe from the terror of Charles's arms.

From Grodno to the Boriſthenes eaſtward, there is nothing but moraſſes, deſerts, and immenſe foreſts. In the cultivated ſpots there are no proviſions to be had, the peaſants burying under *ground* all their grain, and whatever elſe can be

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preſerved in theſe ſubterranean receptacles. In order to diſcover theſe hidden magazines, the earth muſt be pierced with long poles pointed with iron. The Muſcovites and the Swedes alternately made uſe of theſe proviſions; but they were not always to be found, and even then they were not ſufficient.

The king of Sweden, who had foreſeen theſe difficulties, had provided biſcuit for the ſubſiſtence of his army, and nothing could ſtop him in his march. After having traverſed the foreſt of Minſky, where he was every moment obliged to cut down trees in order to clear the road for his troops and baggage, he found himſelf, on the 25th of June 1708, on the banks of the river Berezine, oppoſite to Boriſſow.

In this place the czar had aſſembled the beſt part of his forces, and intrenched himſelf to great advantage. His deſign was to hinder the Swedes from croſſing the river. Charles poſted ſome regiments on the banks of the Berezine, over againſt Boriſſow, as if he meant to attempt a paſſage in the face of the enemy. Mean while he leads his army three leagues higher up the river, throws a bridge acroſs it, cuts his way through a body of three thouſand men who defended that paſs, and, without halting, marches againſt the main body of the enemy. The Ruſſians did not wait his approach, but decamped and retreated towards the Boriſthenes, ſpoiling all the roads, and deſtroying every thing in their way, in order, at leaſt, to retard the progreſs of the Swedes.

Charles ſurmounted every obſtacle, and ſtill advanced towards the Boriſthenes. In his way he met with twenty thouſand Muſcovites, intrenched in a place called Holloſin, behind a moraſs, which

could not be approached without paſſing a river. Charles did not delay the attack till the reſt of his infantry ſhould arrive: he plunges into the water at the head of his foot-guards, and croſſes the river and the moraſs, the water frequently reaching above his ſhoulders. While he was thus preſſing forward to the enemy, he ordered his cavalry to go round the moraſs and take them in flank. The Muſcovites, ſurpriſed that no barrier could defend them, were inſtantly routed by the king, who attacked them on foot, and by the Swediſh cavalry.

The horſe, having forced their way through the enemy, joined the king in the midſt of the battle. He then mounted on horſeback; but ſome time after, obſerving in the field a young Swediſh gentleman, named Gyllenſtiern, for whom he had a great regard, wounded and unable to walk, he forced him to take his horſe, and continued to command on foot at the head of his infantry. Of all the battles he had ever fought, this was perhaps the moſt glorious; this was the one in which he encountered the greateſt dangers, and diſplayed the moſt conſummate ſkill and prudence. The memory of it is ſtill preſerved by a medal, with this inſcription on one ſide, *Sylvæ, paludes, aggeres, hoſtes victi* *: and on the other this verſe of Lucan, *Victrices copias alium laturus in orbem* †.

The Ruſſians, chaſed from all their poſts, repaſſed the Boriſthenes, which divides Poland from Muſcovy. Charles did not give over the purſuit; but followed them acroſs the Boriſthenes, which

* Woods, marſhes, mounds, and enemies conquered.

† *Waſting* his warlike troops to other worlds.

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he paſſed at Mohilou, the laſt town of Poland, and which ſometimes belongs to the Poles, and ſometimes to the Ruſſians; a fate common to frontier places.

The czar thus ſeeing his empire, where he had lately eſtabliſhed the polite arts and a flouriſhing trade, expoſed to a war, which, in a ſhort time, might overturn all his mighty projects, and perhaps deprive him of his crown, began to think ſeriouſly of peace; and accordingly ventured to make ſome propoſals for that purpoſe, by means of a Poliſh gentleman, whom he ſent to the Swediſh army. Charles XII. who had not been uſed to grant peace to his enemies, except in their own capitals, replied, "I will treat with the czar at Moſcow." When this haughty anſwer was reported to the czar, "My brother Charles (ſays he) always affects to act the Alexander; but, I flatter myſelf, he will not find in me another Darius."

From Mohilou, the place where the king paſſed the Boriſthenes, as you advance towards the north, along the banks of that river, and always on the frontiers of Poland and Muſcovy, you meet with the country of Smolenſko, through which lies the great road that leads from Poland to Muſcovy. This way the czar directed his flight; and the king purſued him by long marches. Part of the Ruſſian rear-guard was frequently engaged with the dragoons of the Swediſh van-guard. The latter had generally the advantage; but they weakened themſelves even by conquering in theſe ſmall ſkirmiſhes, which were never deciſive, and in which they always loſt a number of men.

On the 22d of September 1708, the king attacked, near Smolenſko, a body of ten thouſand horſe, and ſix thouſand Calmucks.

Theſe

Theſe Calmucks are Tartars, living between the kingdom of Aſtracan, which is ſubject to the czar, and that of Samarcande, belonging to the Uſbeck Tartars, and the country of Timur, known by the name of Tamerlane. The country of the Calmucks extends eaſtward to the mountains which divide the mogul from the weſtern parts of Aſia. Thoſe who inhabit that part of the country which borders upon Aſtracan are tributary to the czar, who pretends to an abſolute authority over them; but their vagrant life hinders him from making good his claim, and obliges him to treat them in the ſame manner in which the grand ſeignior treats the Arabs, ſometimes conniving at, and ſometimes puniſhing their robberies. There are always ſome of theſe Calmucks in the Ruſſian army; and the czar had even reduced them to a regular diſcipline, like the reſt of his ſoldiers.

The king attacked theſe troops with only ſix regiments of horſe, and four thouſand foot; broke their ranks at the firſt onſet, at the head of his Oſtrogothick regiment, and obliged them to fly. He purſued them thro' rugged and hollow ways, where the Calmucks lay concealed, who ſoon began to ſhew themſelves and cut off the regiment in which the king fought from the reſt of the Swediſh army. In an inſtant the Ruſſians and Calmucks ſurrounded this regiment, and penetrated even to the king. Two aids de camp who fought near him fell at his feet. The king's horſe was killed under him; and as one of his equerries was preſenting him with another, both the equerry and horſe were ſtruck dead upon the ſpot. Charles fought on foot, ſurrounded by ſome of his officers, who inſtantly flocked around him.

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Many of them were taken, wounded, or ſlain, or puſhed to a great diſtance from the king by the crowds that aſſailed them; ſo that he was left at laſt with no more than five attendants. With his own hand he had killed above a dozen of the enemy, without receiving a ſingle wound, owing to that ſurpriſing good fortune which had hitherto attended him, and upon which he always relied. At length a colonel, named Dardof, forced his way through the Calmucks, with a ſingle company of his regiment, and arrived time enough to ſave the king. The reſt of the Swedes put the Tartars to the ſword. The army recovered its ranks; Charles mounted his horſe, and, fatigued as he was, purſued the Ruſſians for two leagues.

The conqueror was ſtill in the great road to the capital of Muſcovy. The diſtance from Smolenſko, near which the battle was fought, to Moſcow, is about an hundred French leagues; and the army began to be in want of proviſion. The officers earneſtly entreated the king to wait till general Levenhaupt, who was coming up with a reinforcement of fifteen thouſand men, ſhould arrive. The king, who ſeldom indeed took counſel of any one, not only rejected this wholeſome advice, but, to the great aſtoniſhment of all the army, quitted the road to Moſcow, and began to march ſouthwards towards the Ukraine, the country of the Coſſacks, lying between Little Tartary, Poland, and Muſcovy. This country extends about an hundred French leagues from ſouth to north, and almoſt as many from eaſt to weſt. It is divided into two parts, almoſt equal, by the Boriſthenes, which runs from the north-weſt to the ſouth-eaſt. The chief town is called Bathurin, and is ſituated upon the little river

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Sem. The northern part of the Ukraine is rich and well cultivated. The ſouthern, lying in the forty-eighth degree of latitude, is one of the moſt fertile countries in the world, and yet one of the moſt deſolate. Its bad form of government ſtifles in embryo, as it were, all the bleſſings which nature, if properly encouraged, would ſhower down upon the inhabitants. The people of theſe cantons neither ſow nor plant, becauſe the Tartars of Budziack, Precop, and Moldavia, all of them free-booters and banditti, would rob them of their harveſts.

Ukrania hath always aſpired to liberty; but being ſurrounded by Muſcovy, the dominions of the grand ſeignior, and Poland, it has been obliged to chuſe a protector, and conſequently a maſter, in one of theſe three ſtates. The Ukranians at firſt put themſelves under the protection of the Poles, who treated them with great ſeverity. They afterwards ſubmitted to the Ruſſians, who governed them with deſpotic ſway. They had originally the privilege of electing a prince under the name of general; but they were ſoon deprived of that right; and their general was nominated by the court of Moſcow.

The perſon who then filled that ſtation was a Poliſh gentleman, named Mazeppa, and born in the palatinate of Podolia. He had been brought up as a page to John Caſimir, and had received ſome tincture of learning in his court. An intrigue which he had had in his youth with the lady of a Poliſh gentleman, having been diſcovered, the huſband cauſed him to be bound ſtark-naked upon a wild horſe, and let him go in that *condition*. The horſe, who had been brought out *of Ukrania*, returned to his own country, and carried

carried Mazeppa along with him, half-dead with hunger and fatigue. Some of the country-people gave him aſſiſtance; and he lived among them for a long time, and ſignalized himſelf in ſeveral excurſions againſt the Tartars. The ſuperiority of his knowledge gained him great reſpect among the Coſſacks; and his reputation daily encreaſing, the czar found it neceſſary to make him prince of Ukrania.

While he was one day at table with the czar at Moſcow, the emperor propoſed to him to diſcipline the Coſſacks, and to render them more dependent. Mazeppa replied, that the ſituation of Ukrania, and the genius of the nation, were inſuperable obſtacles to ſuch a ſcheme. The czar, who began to be over-heated with wine, and who had not always the command of his paſſions, called him a traitor, and threatened to have him empaled.

Mazeppa, on his return to Ukrania, formed the deſign of a revolt; and the execution of it was greatly facilitated by the Swediſh army, which ſoon after appeared on his frontiers. He reſolved to render himſelf independent, and to erect Ukrania and ſome other ruins of the Ruſſian empire into a powerful kingdom. Brave, enterprizing, and indefatigable, though advanced in years, he entered into a ſecret league with the king of Sweden, to haſten the downfal of the czar, and to convert it to his own advantage.

The king appointed the rendezvous near the river Deſna. Mazeppa promiſed to meet him there at the head of thirty thouſand men, with ammunition and proviſions, and all his treaſures, which were immenſe. The Swediſh army therefore continued its march on that ſide, to the great grief

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of all the officers, who knew nothing of the king's treaty with the Coſſacks. Charles ſent orders to Levenhaupt to bring his troops and proviſions with all poſſible diſpatch into Ukrania, where he propoſed to paſs the winter, that, having once ſecured that country, he might the more eaſily conquer Muſcovy in the enſuing ſpring; and, in the mean time, he advanced towards the river Deſna, which falls into the Boriſthenes at Kiou.

The obſtructions they had hitherto found in their march were but trifling, in compariſon of what they met with in this new road. They were obliged to croſs a marſhy foreſt fifty leagues in length. General Lagercron, who marched before with five thouſand ſoldiers and pioneers, led the army aſtray to the eaſtward, thirty leagues from the right road. It was not till after a march of four days that the king diſcovered the miſtake. With great difficulty they regained the main road; but almoſt all their artillery and waggons were loſt, being either ſtuck faſt, or quite ſunk in the mud.

At laſt, after a march of twelve days, attended with ſo many vexatious and untoward circumſtances, during which they had conſumed the ſmall quantity of biſcuit that was left, the army, exhauſted with hunger and fatigue, arrived on the banks of the Deſna, in the very ſpot which Mazeppa had marked out as the place of rendezvous; but inſtead of meeting with that prince, they found a body of Muſcovites advancing towards the other bank of the river. The king was aſtoniſhed, but reſolved immediately to paſs the Deſna and attack the enemy. The banks of the river were ſo ſteep, that they were obliged to let the ſoldiers down with ropes. They croſſed it in

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their uſual manner, ſome on floats which were made in haſte, and others by ſwimming. The body of Muſcovites which arrived at the ſame time did not exceed eight thouſand men; ſo that it made but little reſiſtance, and this obſtacle was alſo ſurmounted.

Charles advanced farther into this deſolate country, alike uncertain of his road and of Mazeppa's fidelity. That Coſſack appeared at laſt, but rather like a fugitive than a powerful ally. The Muſcovites had diſcovered and defeated his deſign; they had fallen upon the Coſſacks and cut them in pieces. His principal friends being taken ſword in hand, had, to the number of thirty, been broke upon the wheel; his towns were reduced to aſhes; his treaſures plundered; the proviſions he was preparing for the king of Sweden ſeized; and it was with great difficulty that he himſelf made his eſcape with ſix thouſand men, and ſome horſes loaden with gold and ſilver. However he gave the king ſome hopes that he ſhould be able to aſſiſt him by his intelligence in that unknown country, and by the affection of all the Coſſacks, who being enraged againſt the Ruſſians, flocked to the camp and ſupplied the army with proviſions.

Charles hoped that general Levenhaupt at leaſt would come and repair this misfortune. He was to bring with him about fifteen thouſand Swedes, who were better than an hundred thouſand Coſſacks, together with ammunition and proviſions. At length he arrived, in much the ſame condition with Mazeppa.

He had already paſſed the Boriſthenes above Mohilou, and advanced twenty leagues beyond it, on the road to the Ukraine. He was bringing the king a convoy of eight thouſand waggons,

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with the money which he had levied in his march through Lithuania. As he approached the town of Leſno, near the conflux of the rivers Pronia and Soſſa, which fall into the Boriſthenes far below, the czar appeared at the head of near forty thouſand men.

The Swediſh general, who had not ſixteen thouſand complete, ſcorned to ſhelter himſelf in a fortified camp. A long train of victories had inſpired the Swedes with ſo much confidence, that they never informed themſelves of the number of their enemies, but only of the place where they lay. Accordingly, on the ſeventh of October 1708, in the afternoon, Levenhaupt advanced againſt them with great reſolution. In the firſt attack the Swedes killed fifteen hundred Ruſſians. The czar's army was thrown into confuſion, and fled on all ſides. The emperor of Ruſſia ſaw himſelf upon the point of being entirely defeated. He was ſenſible that the ſafety of his dominions depended upon the ſucceſs of this day, and that he would be utterly ruined, ſhould Levenhaupt join the king of Sweden with a victorious army.

The moment he ſaw his troops begin to flinch, he ran to the rear guard, where the Coſſacks and Calmucks were poſted. "I charge you, ſaid he to them, to fire upon every one that runs away, and even to kill me, ſhould I be ſo cowardly as to fly." From thence he returned to the van guard, and rallied his troops in perſon, aſſiſted by the princes Menzikoff and Gallickſin. Levenhaupt, who had received ſtrict orders to rejoin his maſter, choſe rather to continue his march than renew the battle, imagining he had done enough to prevent the enemy from purſuing him.

Next

Next morning, about eleven o'clock, the czar attacked him near a moraſs, and extended his lines with a view to ſurround him. The Swedes faced about on all ſides; and the battle was maintained for the ſpace of two hours with equal courage and obſtinacy. The loſs of the Muſcovites was three times greater than that of the Swedes; the former, however, ſtill kept their ground, and the victory was left undecided.

At four in the afternoon general Bayer brought the czar a reinforcement of troops. The battle was then renewed for the third time with more fury and eagerneſs than ever, and laſted till night put an end to the combat. At laſt ſuperior numbers prevailed, the Swedes were broke, routed, and driven back to their baggage. Levenhaupt rallied his troops behind the waggons. The Swedes were conquered, but diſdained to fly. They were ſtill about nine thouſand in number, and not ſo much as one of them deſerted. The general drew them up with as much eaſe as if they had not been vanquiſhed. The czar, on the other ſide, remained all night under arms; and forbad his officers, under pain of being caſhiered, and his ſoldiers under pain of death, to leave their ranks for the ſake of plunder.

Next morning at day-break, he ordered a freſh aſſault. Levenhaupt had retired to an advantageous ſituation, at the diſtance of a few miles, after having nailed up part of his cannon, and ſet fire to his waggons.

The Muſcovites arrived time enough to prevent the whole convoy from being conſumed by the flames. They ſeized about ſix thouſand waggons, which they ſaved. The czar, deſirous of compleating the defeat of the Swedes, ſent one of

of his generals, named Phlug, to attack them again for the fifth time. That general offered them an honourable capitulation. Levenhaupt refuſed it, and fought a fifth battle, as bloody as any of the former. Of the nine thouſand ſoldiers he had left, he loſt about one half in this action, and the other remained unbroken. At laſt, night coming on, Levenhaupt, after having ſuſtained five battles againſt forty thouſand men, paſſed the Soſſa with about five thouſand ſoldiers that remained. The czar loſt about ten thouſand men in theſe five engagements, in which he had the glory of conquering the Swedes, and Levenhaupt that of diſputing the victory for three days, and of effecting a retreat, without being obliged to ſurrender. Thus he arrived in his maſter's camp with the honour of having made ſuch a noble defence; but bringing with him neither ammunition nor an army.

By theſe means Charles found himſelf deſtitute of proviſions, cut off from all communication with Poland, and ſurrounded with enemies, in the heart of a country where he had no reſource but his own courage.

In this extremity, the memorable winter of 1709, which was ſtill more terrible in thoſe quarters of the world than in France, deſtroyed part of his army. Charles reſolved to brave the ſeaſons, as he had done his enemies; and ventured to make long marches with his troops during this mortal cold. It was in one of theſe marches that two thouſand men fell dead with cold before his eyes. The dragoons had no boots, and the foot ſoldiers were without ſhoes, and almoſt without cloaths. They were forced to make ſtockings of the ſkins of wild beaſts, in the beſt

manner they could. They were frequently in want of bread. They were obliged to throw almoſt all their cannon into the marſhes and rivers, for want of horſes to draw them; ſo that this army, which was once ſo flouriſhing, was reduced to twenty-four thouſand men ready to periſh with hunger. They no longer received any news from Sweden, nor were able to ſend any thither. In this condition only one officer complained. "What, ſaid the king to him, are you uneaſy at being ſo far from your wife? If you are a good ſoldier, I will lead you to ſuch a diſtance, that you ſhall hardly be able to receive news from Sweden once in three years."

The marquis de Brancas, afterwards ambaſſador in Sweden, told me, that a ſoldier ventured, in preſence of the whole army, to preſent to the king, with an air of complaint, a peace of bread that was black and mouldy, made of barley and oats, which was the only food they then had, and of which they had not even a ſufficient quantity. The king received the bit of bread without the leaſt emotion, eat it up, and then ſaid coldly to the ſoldier, "It is not good, but it may be eaten." This incident, trifling as it is, if indeed any thing that increaſes reſpect and confidence can be ſaid to be trifling, contributed more than all the reſt to make the Swediſh army ſupport thoſe hardſhips, which would have been intolerable under any other general.

While he was in this ſituation, he at laſt received a packet from Stockholm, by which he was informed of the death of his ſiſter, the dutcheſs of Holſtein, who was carried off by the ſmall pox, in the month of December 1708, in the twenty-ſeventh year of her age. She was

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a princeſs as mild and gentle as her brother was imperious in his diſpoſition, and implacable in his revenge. He had always entertained a great affection for her; and was the more afflicted with her death, that now beginning to taſte of misfortunes himſelf, he was of courſe become the more ſuſceptible of tender impreſſions.

By this packet he was likewiſe informed, that his they had raiſed money and troops, in obedience to orders; but nothing could reach his camp, as between him and Stockholm there were near five hundred leagues to travel, and an enemy ſuperior in number to engage.

The czar, who was as active as the king of Sweden, after having ſent ſome freſh troops to the aſſiſtance of the confederates in Poland, who under the command of general Siniauſki, exerted their joint efforts againſt Staniſlaus, immediately advanced into the Ukraine in the midſt of this ſevere winter, to make head againſt his Swediſh majeſty. Then he continued to purſue the political ſcheme he had formed of weakening his enemy by petty rencounters, wiſely judging that the Swediſh army muſt in the end be entirely ruined, as it could not poſſibly be recruited. The cold muſt certainly have been very ſevere, as it obliged the two monarchs to agree to a ſuſpenſion of arms. But on the firſt of February they renewed their military operations, in the midſt of froſt and ſnow.

After ſeveral ſlight ſkirmiſhes, and ſome loſſes, the king perceived in the month of April, that he had only eighteen thouſand Swedes remaining. Mazeppa, the prince of the Caſſocks, ſupplied them with proviſions; without his aſſiſtance, the army muſt have periſhed with want and hunger. At

this conjuncture, the czar made propoſals to Mazeppa for ſubmitting again to his authority. But whether it was that the terrible puniſhment of the wheel, by which his friends had periſhed, made the Coſſac apprehend the ſame danger for himſelf, or that he was deſirous of revenging their death, he continued faithful to his new ally.

Charles, with his eighteen thouſand Swedes, had neither laid aſide the deſign nor the hopes of penetrating to Moſcow. Towards the end of May he laid ſiege to Pultowa, upon the river Voiſkla, at the eaſtern extremity of the Ukraine, and thirty leagues from the Boriſthenes. This country is inhabited by the Zaporavians, the moſt remarkable people in the univerſe. They are a collection of ancient Ruſſians, Poles, and Tartars, profeſſing a ſpecies of Chriſtianity, and exerciſing a kind of free-booting, ſomewhat a-kin to that of the buccaneers. They chuſe a chief, whom they frequently depoſe or ſtrangle. They allow no women to live among them; but they carry off all the children for twenty or thirty leagues around, and bring them up in their own manners. The ſummer they always paſs in the open fields; in winter they ſhelter themſelves in large barns, containing four or five thouſand men. They fear nothing; they live free; they brave death for the ſmalleſt booty, with as much intrepidity as Charles XII. did, in order to obtain the power of beſtowing crowns. The czar gave them ſixty thouſand florins, hoping by this means to engage them in his intereſt. They took his money; and, influenced by the powerful eloquence of Mazeppa, declared in favour of Charles XII. but their ſervice was of very little conſequence,

as they think it the moſt egregious folly to fight for any thing but plunder. It was no ſmall advantage, however, that they were prevented from doing harm. The number of their troops was, at moſt, but about two thouſand. One morning ten of their chiefs were preſented to the king; but it was with great difficulty they could be prevailed upon to remain ſober, as they commonly begin the day by getting drunk. They were brought to the intrenchments, where they ſhewed their dexterity in firing with long carbines; for being placed upon the mounds, they killed ſuch of the enemy as they picked out at the diſtance of two hundred paces. To theſe banditti Charles added ſome thouſands of Walachians, whom he had hired from the cham of Little Tartary; and thus laid ſiege to Pultowa, with all theſe troops of Zaporavians, Coſſacks, and Walachians, which joined to his eighteen thouſand Swedes, compoſed an army of about thirty thouſand men; but an army in a wretched condition, and in want of every thing. The czar had formed a magazine in Pultowa. If the king ſhould take it, he would open himſelf a way to Muſcovy; and be able at leaſt, amidſt the great abundance he would then poſſeſs, to wait the arrival of the ſuccours which he ſtill expected from Sweden, Livonia, Pomerania, and Poland. His only reſource therefore being in the conqueſt of Pultowa, he preſſed the ſiege of it with great vigour. Mazeppa, who carried on a correſpondence with ſome of the citizens, aſſured him that he would ſoon be maſter of it; and this aſſurance revived the hopes of the ſoldiers, who conſidered the taking of Pultowa as the end of all their miſeries.

The king perceived, from the beginning of the ſiege, that he had taught his enemies the art of war. In ſpite of all his precautions, prince Menzikoff threw ſome freſh troops into the town; by which means the garriſon was rendered almoſt five thouſand ſtrong.

They made ſeveral ſallies, and ſometimes with ſucceſs: they likewiſe ſprung a mine; but what ſaved the town from being taken was the approach of the czar, who was advancing with ſeventy thouſand men. Charles went to reconnoitre them on the twenty-ſeventh of May, which happened to be his birth-day, and beat one of their detachments; but as he was returning to his camp, he received a ſhot from a carbine, which pierced his boot and ſhattered the bone of his heel. There was not the leaſt alteration obſervable in his countenance, from which it could be ſuſpected that he had received a wound. He continued to give his orders with great compoſure, and after this accident remained almoſt ſix hours on horſeback. One of his domeſticks obſerving that the ſole of the king's boot was bloody, made haſte to call the ſurgeons; and the pain was now become ſo exquiſite, that they were obliged to aſſiſt him in diſmounting, and to carry him to his tent. The ſurgeons examined the wound, and were of opinion that the leg muſt be cut off, which threw the army into the utmoſt conſternation. But one of the ſurgeons, named Newman, who had more ſkill and courage than the reſt, affirmed, that by making deep inciſions he could ſave the king's leg. "Fall to work then preſently, ſaid the king to him: cut boldly, and fear nothing." He himſelf held the leg with both his hands, and beheld the inciſions that were made

in it, as if the operation had been performed upon another perſon.

As they were laying on the dreſſing, he ordered an aſſault to be made the next morning; but he had hardly given theſe orders, when he was informed that the whole army of the enemy was advancing againſt him; in conſequence of which he was obliged to alter his reſolution. Charles, wounded and incapable of acting, ſaw himſelf cooped up between the Boriſthenes and the river that runs to Pultowa, in a deſert country, without any places of ſecurity, or ammunition, in the face of an army, which at once cut off his retreat, and prevented his being ſupplied with proviſions. In this extremity, he did not aſſemble a council of war, as, conſidering the perplexed ſituation of his affairs, he ought to have done; but on the ſeventh or eighth of July, in the evening, he ſent for velt-mareſchal Renſchild to his tent; and without deliberation, or the leaſt diſcompoſure, ordered him to make the neceſſary diſpoſitions for attacking the czar next day. Renſchild made no objections, and went to carry his orders into execution. At the door of the king's tent he met count Piper, with whom he had long lived on very bad terms, as frequently happens between the miniſter and the general. Piper aſked him if he had any news: No, ſaid the general coldly, and paſſed on to give his orders. As ſoon as count Piper had entered the tent; "Has Renſchild told you nothing?" ſaid the king: "Nothing," replied Piper: "Well then, reſumed he, I tell you, that we ſhall give battle to-morrow." Count Piper was aſtoniſhed at ſuch a deſperate reſolution; but well knowing that it was impoſſible to make his maſter change his mind,

mind, he expreſſed his ſurprize only by his ſilence, and left Charles to ſleep till break of day.

It was on the eighth of July 1709, that the deciſive battle of Pultowa was fought between the two moſt famous monarchs that were then in the world. Charles XII. illuſtrious for nine years of victories; Peter Alexiowitz for nine years of pains taken to form troops equal to thoſe of Sweden: the one glorious for having given away dominions; the other for having civilized his own: Charles, fond of dangers, and fighting for glory alone: Alexiowitz ſcorning to fly from danger, and never making war but from intereſted views: the Swediſh monarch liberal from an innate greatneſs of ſoul *; the Muſcovite never granting favours but in order to ſerve ſome particular people: the former a prince of uncommon ſobriety and continence, naturally magnanimous, and never cruel but once; the latter having not yet worn off the roughneſs of his education, or the barbarity of his country, as much the object of terror to his ſubjects as of admiration to ſtrangers, and too prone to exceſſes, which even ſhortened his days. Charles had the title of "Invincible," of which a ſingle

* We cannot perceive the leaſt tincture of liberality or greatneſs of ſoul in Charles. He might indeed have made himſelf king of Poland by dint of violence; but the conſequence of that violence would have diſabled him from gratifying his revenge, which ſeems to have been the predominant paſſion of his ſoul. Had he aſcended the throne of Poland, he muſt have maintained an army of Swedes in that kingdom, conſequently he could not have advanced to the banks of the Boriſthenes in purſuit of Peter Alexiowitz. We find in Charles an inſenſibility of danger, a contempt of wealth, a clowniſhneſs of manners, a brutality of diſpoſition, an implacable thirſt of revenge and dominion; without taſte, ſentiment, or humanity.

moment might deprive him; the neighbouring nations had already given Peter Alexiowitz the name of "Great;" which, as he did not owe it to his victories, he could not forfeit by a defeat.

In order to form a diſtinct idea of this battle, and the place where it was fought, we muſt figure to ourſelves Pultowa on the north, the camp of the king of Sweden on the ſouth, ſtretching a little towards the eaſt, his baggage about a mile behind him, and the river of Pultowa on the north of the town, running from eaſt to weſt.

The czar had paſſed the river about a league from Pultowa, towards the weſt, and was beginning to form his camp.

At break of day the Swedes appeared before the trenches with four iron cannons for their whole artillery; the reſt were left in the camp, with about three thouſand men, and four thouſand remained with the baggage: ſo that the Swediſh army which advanced againſt the enemy, conſiſted of about one and twenty thouſand men, of which about ſixteen thouſand only were regular troops.

The generals Renſchild, Roos, Levenhaupt, Slipenbak, Hoorn, Sparre, Hamilton, the prince of Wirtemberg, the king's relation, and ſome others, who had moſt of them ſeen the battle of Narva, put the ſubaltern officers in mind of that day, when eight thouſand Swedes defeated an army of eighty thouſand Muſcovites in their intrenchments. The officers exhorted the ſoldiers by the ſame motive, and as they advanced they all encouraged one another.

Charles, carried in a litter at the head of his *infantry*, conducted the march. A party of horſe ad-

advanced by his orders to attack that of the enemy; and the battle began with this engagement at half an hour paſt four in the morning. The enemy's horſe was poſted towards the weſt, on the right ſide of the Ruſſian camp. Prince Menzikoff and count Gallowin had placed them at certain diſtances between redoubts lined with cannon. General Slipenbak, at the head of the Swedes, ruſhed upon them. All thoſe who have ſerved in the Swediſh troops are ſenſible that it is almoſt impoſſible to withſtand the fury of their firſt attack. The Muſcovite ſquadrons were broken and routed. The czar ran up to rally them in perſon; his hat was pierced with a muſket ball; Menzikoff had three horſes killed under him; and the Swedes cried out, Victory.

Charles did not doubt but the battle was gained. About midnight he had ſent general Creuts with five thouſand horſe or dragoons to take the enemy in flank, while he attacked them in front; but as his ill fortune would have it, Creuts miſtook his way, and did not make his appearance. The czar, who thought he was ruined, had time to rally his cavalry, and in his turn fell upon that of the king, which, not being ſupported by the detachment of Creuts, was likewiſe broken. Slipenbak was taken priſoner in this engagement. At the ſame time ſeventy-two pieces of cannon played from the camp upon the cavalry; and the Ruſſian foot opening their lines, advanced to attack Charles's infantry.

After this the czar detached prince Menzikoff to go and take poſt between Pultowa and the Swedes. Prince Menzikoff executed his maſter's orders with dexterity and expedition. He not only cut off the communication between the Swe-

diſh army and the camp before Pultowa; but having met with a corps de reſerve, he ſurrounded them and cut them in pieces. If Menzikoff performed this exploit of his own accord, Ruſſia is indebted to him for its preſervation: if it was by the orders of the czar, he was an adverſary worthy of Charles XII. Mean while the Ruſſian infantry came out of their lines, and advanced into the plain in order of battle. On the other hand, the Swediſh cavalry rallied within a quarter of a league from the enemy; and the king, aſſiſted by veltmareſchal Renſchild, made the neceſſary diſpoſitions for a general engagement.

He ranged the few troops that were left him in two lines, his infantry occupying the center and his cavalry forming the two wings. The czar diſpoſed his army in the ſame manner. He had the advantage of numbers, and of ſeventy-two pieces of cannon, while the Swedes had no more than four to oppoſe to him, and began to be in want of powder.

The emperor of Muſcovy was in the center of his army, having then only the title of major-general, and ſeemed to obey general Zermetoff. But he rode from rank to rank in the character of emperor, mounted on a Turkiſh horſe, which had been given him in a preſent by the grand ſignor, animating the captains and ſoldiers, and promiſing rewards to them all.

At nine in the morning the battle was renewed. One of the firſt diſcharges of the Ruſſian cannon carried off the two horſes of Charles's litter. He cauſed two others to be immediately put to it. A ſecond diſcharge broke the litter in pieces, and overturned the king. Of four and twenty Drabants, who mutually relieved each other in carrying

ſying him, one and twenty were killed. The Swedes, ſtruck with conſternation, began to ſtagger; and the cannon of the enemy continuing to mow them down, the firſt line fell back upon the ſecond, and the ſecond began to fly. In this laſt action it was only a ſingle line of ten thouſand Ruſſian infantry that routed the Swediſh army: ſo much were matters changed!

All the Swediſh writers alledge, that they would have gained the battle, if they had not committed ſeveral blunders; but all the officers affirm that it was a great blunder to give battle at all, and a greater ſtill to ſhut themſelves up in a deſert country, againſt the advice of the moſt prudent generals, in oppoſition to a warlike enemy, three times ſtronger than Charles, both in number of men, and in the many reſources from which the Swedes were entirely cut off. The remembrance of Narva was the chief cauſe of Charles's misfortune at Pultowa.

The prince of Wirtemberg, general Renſchild, and ſeveral principal officers were already made priſoners; the camp before Pultowa was ſtormed; and all was thrown into a confuſion which it was impoſſible to rectify. Count Piper, with ſome officers of the chancery, had left the camp, and neither knew what to do, nor what was become of the king; but ran about from one corner of the field to another. A major, called Bere, offered to conduct them to the baggage; but the clouds of duſt and ſmoke which covered the plain, and the diſſipation of mind ſo natural amidſt ſuch a deſolation, brought them ſtraight to the counterſcarp of the town, where they were all made priſoners by the garriſon.

The king ſcorned to fly, and yet was unable to defend himſelf. General Poniatowſky happened to be near him at that inſtant. He was a colonel of Staniſlaus's Swediſh guards, a man of extraordinary merit, and had been induced, from his ſtrong attachment to the perſon of Charles, to follow him into the Ukraine, without any poſt in the army. He was a man, who, in all the occurrences of life, and amidſt thoſe dangers when others would at moſt have diſplayed their courage, always took his meaſures with diſpatch, prudence, and ſucceſs. He made a ſign to two Drabants, who took the king under the arm, and placed him on his horſe, notwithanding the exquiſite pain of his wounds.

Poniatowſky, though he had no command in the army, became on this occaſion a general thro' neceſſity, and drew up five hundred horſe near the king's perſon; ſome of them Drabants, others officers, and a few private troopers. This body being aſſembled and animated by the misfortune of their prince, forced their way through more than ten Ruſſian regiments, and conducted Charles through the midſt of the enemy for the ſpace of a league, to the baggage of the Swediſh army.

Charles, being cloſely purſued in his flight, had his horſe killed under him; and colonel Gieta, though wounded and ſpent with loſs of blood, gave him his. Thus in the courſe of the flight they twice put this conqueror on horſeback, though he had not been able to mount a horſe during the engagement.

This ſurpriſing retreat was of great conſequence in ſuch diſtreſsful circumſtances; but he was obliged to fly to a ſtill greater diſtance. They found count Piper's coach among the baggage;

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for the king had never uſed one ſince he left Stockholm: they put him into this vehicle, and fled towards the Boriſthenes with great precipitation. The king, who, from the time of his being ſet on horſeback till his arrival at the baggage, had not ſpoke a ſingle word, at length enquired, what was become of count Piper? They told him he was taken priſoner, with all the officers of the chancery. "And general Renſchild and the duke of Wirtemberg?" added the king. "Yes," ſays Poniatowſky. "Priſoners to the Ruſſians!" reſumed Charles, ſhrugging up his ſhoulders; "Come then, let us rather go to the Turks." They could not perceive, however, the leaſt mark of dejection in his countenance; and had any one ſeen him at that time, without knowing his ſituation, he would never have ſuſpected that he was conquered and wounded.

While he was getting off, the Ruſſians ſeized his artillery in the camp before Pultowa, his baggage, and his military-cheſt, in which they found ſix millions in ſpecie, the ſpoils of Poland and Saxony. Nine thouſand men, partly Swedes and partly Coſſacks, were killed in the battle, and about ſix thouſand taken priſoners. There ſtill remained about ſixteen thouſand men, including the Swedes, Poles, and Coſſacks, who fled towards the Boriſthenes, under the conduct of general Levenhaupt. He marched one way with theſe fugitive troops; and the king took another road with ſome of his horſe. The coach in which he rode broke down by the way, and they again ſet him on horſeback: and, to complete his misfortune, he wandered all night in a wood; where, his courage being no longer able to ſupport his exhauſted ſpirits, the pain of his wound becoming

more intolerable through fatigue, and his horſe falling under him through exceſſive wearineſs, he lay ſome hours at the foot of a tree, in danger of being ſurpriſed every moment by the conquerors, who were ſearching for him on all ſides.

At laſt, on the 9th or 10th of July, at night, he found himſelf on the banks of the Boriſthenes. Levenhaupt had juſt arrived with the ſhattered remains of the army. It was with an equal mixture of joy and ſorrow that the Swedes again beheld their king, whom they thought to be dead. The enemy was approaching. The Swedes had neither a bridge to paſs the river, nor time to make one, nor powder to defend themſelves, nor proviſions to ſupport an army, which had eat nothing for two days. But the remains of this army were Swedes, and the conquered king was Charles XII. Moſt of the officers imagined, that they were to halt there for the Ruſſians, without flinching; and that they would either conquer or die on the banks of the Boriſthenes. Charles would undoubtedly have taken this reſolution, had he not been exhauſted with weakneſs. His wound was now come to a ſuppuration, attended with a fever; and it hath been remarked, that men of the greateſt intrepidity, when ſeized with the fever that is common in a ſuppuration, loſe that impulſe to valour, which, like all other virtues, requires the direction of a clear head. Charles was no longer himſelf. This, at leaſt, is what I have been well aſſured of, and what indeed is extremely probable. They carried him along like a ſick perſon in a ſtate of inſenſibility. Happily there was ſtill left a ſorry calaſh, which by chance they had brought along with them: this they put *on board* of a little boat; and the king and ge-

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neral Mazeppa embarked in another. The latter had ſaved ſeveral coffers full of money; but the current being rapid, and a violent wind beginning to blow, the Coſſack threw more than three fourths of his treaſures into the river to lighten the boat. Mullern, the king's chancellor, and count Poniatowſky, a man more neceſſary to the king than ever, on account of his admirable dexterity in finding expedients for all difficulties, croſſed over in other barks with ſome officers. Three hundred troopers of the king's guards, and a great number of Poles and Coſſacks, truſting to the goodneſs of their horſes, ventured to paſs the river by ſwimming. Their troop keeping cloſe together, reſiſted the current, and broke the waves; but all thoſe who attempted to paſs ſeparately, a little below, were carried down by the ſtream, and ſunk in the river. Of all the foot who attempted to paſs, there was not a ſingle man that reached the other ſide.

While the ſhattered remains of the army were in this extremity, prince Menzikoff came up with ten thouſand horſemen, having each a foot-ſoldier behind him. The carcaſſes of the Swedes who had died by the way, of their wounds, fatigue, and hunger, ſhewed prince Menzikoff but too plainly the road which the fugitive army had taken. The prince ſent a trumpet to the Swediſh general, to offer him a capitulation. Four general officers were preſently diſpatched by Levenhaupt to receive the commands of the conqueror. Before that day, ſixteen thouſand ſoldiers of king Charles would have attacked the whole forces of the Ruſſian empire, and would have periſhed to a man rather than ſurrender. But after the loſs of

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a battle, and a flight of two days, deprived of the preſence of their prince, who was himſelf conſtrained to fly, the ſtrength of every ſoldier being exhauſted, and their courage no longer ſupported by the leaſt proſpect of relief, the love of life overcame their natural intrepidity. Colonel Troutfetre alone, obſerving the Muſcovites approach, began to advance with one Swediſh battalion to attack them, hoping by this means to induce the reſt of the troops to follow his example. But Levenhaupt was obliged to oppoſe this unavailing ardour. The capitulation was ſettled, and the whole army were made priſoners of war. Some ſoldiers, reduced to deſpair at the thoughts of falling into the hands of the Muſcovites, threw themſelves into the Boriſthenes. Two officers of the regiment commanded by the brave Troutfetre, killed each other, and the reſt were made ſlaves. They all filed off in preſence of prince Menzikoff, laying their arms at his feet, as thirty thouſand Muſcovites had done nine years before at thoſe of the king of Sweden, at Narva. But whereas the king ſent back all the Ruſſians, whom he did not fear, the czar retained the Swedes that were taken at Pultowa.

Theſe unhappy creatures were afterwards diſperſed through the czar's dominions, particularly in Siberia, a vaſt province of Great Tartary, which extends eaſtward to the frontiers of the Chineſe empire. In this barbarous country, where even the uſe of bread was unknown, the Swedes, who were become ingenious through neceſſity, exerciſed the trades and employments of which they had the leaſt notion. All the diſtinctions which fortune makes among men were there baniſhed.

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The officer, who could not follow any trade, was obliged to cleave and carry wood for the ſoldier, now turned taylor, clothier, joiner, maſon, or goldſmith, and who got a ſubſiſtence by his labour. Some of the officers became painters, and others architects. Some of them taught the languages and mathematics. They even eſtabliſhed ſome public ſchools, which in time became ſo uſeful and famous, that the citizens of Moſcow ſent their children thither for education.

Count Piper, the king of Sweden's firſt miniſter, was for a long time confined in priſon at Peterſburg. The czar was perſuaded, as well as the reſt of Europe, that this miniſter had ſold his maſter to the duke of Marlborough, and drawn on Muſcovy the arms of Sweden, which might have given peace to Europe; for which reaſon he rendered his confinement the more ſevere. Piper died in Muſcovy a few years after, little aſſiſted by his own family, which lived in opulence at Stockholm, and vainly lamented by his ſovereign, who would never condeſcend to offer a ranſom for his miniſter, which he feared the czar would not accept of, for no cartel of exchange had ever been ſettled between them.

The emperor of Muſcovy, elated with a joy which he was at no pains to conceal, received upon the field of battle the priſoners, whom they brought to him in crouds; and aſked every moment, "Where then is my brother Charles?"

He did the Swediſh generals the honour of inviting them to dine with him. Among other queſtions which he put to them, he asked general Renſchild, what might be the number of his maſter's troops before the battle? Renſchild anſwered,

ed, That the king always kept the muſter-roll himſelf, and would never ſhew it to any one; but that, for his own part, he imagined the whole might be about thirty thouſand, of which eighteen thouſand were Swedes, and the reſt Coſſacks. The czar ſeemed to be ſurpriſed, and aſked how they durſt venture to penetrate into ſo diſtant a country, and lay ſiege to Pultowa with ſuch a handful of men? "We were not always conſulted, (replied the Swediſh general;) but, like faithful ſervants, we obeyed our maſter's orders, without ever preſuming to contradict them." The czar, upon receiving this anſwer, turned about to ſome of his courtiers, who were formerly ſuſpected of having engaged in a conſpiracy againſt him: "Ah! (ſays he) ſee how a king ſhould be ſerved;" and then taking a glaſs of wine, "To the health (ſays he) of my maſters in the art of war." Renſchild aſked him who were the perſons whom he honoured with ſo high a title? "You, gentlemen, the Swediſh generals," replied the czar. "Your majeſty then (reſumed the count) is very ungrateful, to treat your maſters with ſo much ſeverity." After dinner the czar cauſed their ſwords to be reſtored to all the general officers, and behaved to them like a prince who had a mind to give his ſubjects a leſſon of generoſity and politeneſs, with which he was well acquainted. But this ſame prince, who treated the Swediſh generals with ſo much humanity, cauſed all the Coſſacks that fell into his hands to be broke upon the wheel.

Thus the Swediſh army, which left Saxony in ſuch a triumphant manner, was now no more. One half of them had periſhed with hunger, and the other half were either maſſacred or made ſlaves.

ſlaves. Charles XII. had loſt in one day the fruit of nine years labour, and of almoſt an hundred battles. He made his eſcape in a wretched calaſh, attended by major-general Hoord, who was dangerouſly wounded. The reſt of his little troop followed, ſome on foot, ſome on horſeback, and others in waggons, through a deſert, where neither huts, tents, men, beaſts, nor roads were to be ſeen. Every thing was wanting, even to water itſelf. It was now the beginning of July; the country lay in the forty-ſeventh degree of latitude; the dry ſand of the deſert rendered the heat of the ſun the more inſupportable; the horſes fell by the way; and the men were ready to die with thirſt. A brook of muddy water which they found towards evening was all they met with; they filled ſome bottles with this water, which ſaved the lives of the king's little troop. After a march of five days, he at laſt found himſelf on the banks of the river Hypanis, now called Bogh by the barbarians, who have ſpoiled not only the general face, but even the very names of thoſe countries, which once flouriſhed ſo nobly in the poſſeſſion of the Greek colonies. This river joins the Boriſthenes ſome miles lower, and falls along with it into the Black Sea.

On the other ſide of the Bogh, towards the ſouth, ſtands the little town of Oczakou, a frontier of the Turkiſh empire. The inhabitants ſeeing a body of ſoldiers approach, to whoſe dreſs and language they were entire ſtrangers, refuſed to carry them over the river, without an order from Mehemet Baſha, governor of Oczakou. The king ſent an expreſs to the governor, demanding a paſſage; but the Turk not knowing what to do, in a country

country where one falſe ſtep frequently coſts a man his life, durſt not venture to take any thing upon himſelf, without having firſt obtained permiſſion of the ſeraskier of the province, who reſides at Bender in Beſſarabia. While they were waiting for this permiſſion, the Ruſſians who had made the king's army priſoners had croſſed the Boriſthenes, and were approaching to take him alſo. At laſt the baſha of Oczakou ſent word to the king, that he would furniſh him with one ſmall boat, to tranſport himſelf and two or three of his attendants. In this extremity the Swedes took by force what they could not obtain by gentle means: ſome of them went over to the further ſide in a ſmall ſkiff, ſeized on ſome boats, and brought them to the hither bank of the river. And happy was it for them that they did ſo; for the maſters of the Turkiſh barks, fearing they ſhould loſe ſuch a favourable opportunity of getting a good freight, came in crouds to offer their ſervice. At that very inſtant arrived the favourable anſwer of the ſeraſkier of Bender; and the king had the mortification to ſee five hundred of his men ſeized by the enemy, whoſe inſulting bravadoes he even heard. The baſha of Oczakou, by means of an interpreter, aſked his pardon for the delays which had occaſioned the loſs of theſe five hundred men, and humbly entreated him not to complain of it to the grand ſeignior. Charles promiſed him that he would not; but at the ſame time gave him a ſevere reprimand, as if he had been ſpeaking to one of his own ſubjects.

The commander of Bender, who was likewiſe ſeraskier, a title which anſwers to that of general, and baſha of the province, which ſignifies governor

vernor and intendant, forthwith ſent an aga to compliment the king, and to offer him a magnificent tent, with proviſion, baggage, waggons, and all the conveniencies, officers, and attendant, neceſſary to conduct him to Bender in a ſplendid manner; for it is the cuſtom of the Turks, not only to defray the charges of ambaſſadors to the place of their reſidence, but likewiſe to ſupply, with great liberality, the neceſſities of thoſe princes who take refuge among them, during the time of their ſtay.

THE

THE HISTORY OF CHARLES XII. KING of SWEDEN.

BOOK V.

THE CONTENTS.

State of the OTTOMAN PORTE. CHARLES reſides near BENDER: His Employments: His Intrigues at the PORTE: His Deſigns. AUGUSTUS reſtored to his Throne. The King of DENMARK makes a Deſcent upon SWEDEN. All the other Dominions of CHARLES are invaded. The Czar enters Moscow in Triumph. Affair of PRUTH. Hiſtory of the Czarina, who from a Country-girl became Empreſs.

ACHMET III. was at that time emperor of the Turks. He had been placed upon the throne in 1703, by a revolution not unlike to that which transferred the crown of England from James II. to his ſon-in-law William. Muſtapha being governed by his mufti, who was hated by all the Turks, provoked the whole empire to riſe *againſt* him. His army, by the aſſiſtance of which *he hoped* to puniſh the malecontents, went over

to

to the rebels. He was ſeized, and depoſed in form; and his brother taken from the ſeraglio and advanced to the throne, almoſt without ſpilling a ſingle drop of blood. Achmet ſhut up the depoſed ſultan in the ſeraglio at Conſtantinople, where he lived for ſeveral years, to the great aſtoniſhment of Turky, which had been wont to ſee the dethronement of her princes always followed by their death.

The new ſultan, as the only recompence for a crown which he owed to the miniſters, to the generals, to the officers of the janiſſaries, and in a word to thoſe who had had any hand in the revolution, put them all to death, one after another, for fear they ſhould one day attempt a ſecond revolution. By ſacrificing ſo many brave men, he weakened the ſtrength of the nation; but eſtabliſhed his throne, at leaſt for ſome years. The next object of his attention was to amaſs riches. He was the firſt of the Ottoman race that ventured to make a ſmall alteration in the current coin, and to impoſe new taxes; but he was obliged to drop both theſe enterprizes, for fear of an inſurrection. The rapacity and tyranny of the grand ſeignior are ſeldom felt by any but the officers of the empire, who, whatever they may be in other reſpects, are domeſtic ſlaves to the ſultan; but the reſt of the Muſſulmans live in profound tranquillity, ſecure of their liberty, their lives, and fortunes*.

Such

* We are ſurpriſed to hear our author ſtill harping upon this ſtring, namely, the liberty and ſecurity which the Turks enjoy; as it is well known that theſe miſerable creatures are every day ſubject to be pillaged and maſſacred by the

Such was the Turkiſh emperor to whom the king of Sweden fled for refuge. As ſoon as he ſet foot on the ſultan's territories, he wrote him a letter, which bears date the 13th of July 1709. Several copies of this letter were ſpread abroad, all of which are now held to be ſpurious; but of all thoſe I have ſeen, there is not one but what ſufficiently marks the natural haughtineſs of the author, and is more ſuitable to his courage than his condition. The ſultan did not return him an anſwer till towards the end of September. The pride of the Ottoman Porte made Charles ſenſible what a mighty difference there was between a Turkiſh emperor and a king of part of Scandinavia, a conquered and fugitive Chriſtian. For the reſt, all theſe letters, which kings ſeldom write themſelves, are but vain formalities, which neither ſerve to diſcover the characters of princes, nor the ſtate of their affairs.

Though Charles XII. was in reality no better than a priſoner honourably treated in Turky, he yet formed the deſign of arming the Ottoman empire againſt his enemies. He flattered himſelf that he ſhould be able to reduce Poland under the yoke, and ſubdue Ruſſia. He had an envoy at Conſtantinople; but the perſon that ſerved him moſt effectually in his vaſt projects, was the count de Poniatowsky, who went to Conſtantinople without a commiſſion, and ſoon rendered himſelf neceſſary to the king, agreeable to the Porte, and at laſt dangerous even to the grand viziers *.

the ſoldiery; to be oppreſſed, ſtripped, and often puniſhed with death by the officers of juſtice, even without form of trial.

* It was from this nobleman I received not only the remarks which have been publiſhed, and of which the chaplain Norberg hath made uſe, but likewiſe ſeveral other *manuſcripts relating* to this hiſtory.

One

One of thoſe who ſeconded his deſigns with the greateſt activity, was the phyſician Fonſeca, a Portugueze Jew, ſettled at Conſtantinople, a man of knowledge and addreſs, well qualified for the management of buſineſs, and perhaps the only philoſopher of his nation. His profeſſion procured him a free acceſs to the Ottoman Porte, and frequently gained him the confidence of the viziers. With this gentleman I was very well acquainted at Paris; and all the particulars I am going to relate were, he aſſured me, unqueſtionable truths. Count Poniatowſky hath informed me, both by letters and by word of mouth, that he had the addreſs to convey ſome letters to the ſultaneſs Valide, the mother of the reigning emperor, who had formerly been ill-uſed by her ſon, but now began to recover her influence in the ſeraglio. A Jeweſs, who was often admitted to this princeſs, was perpetually recounting to her the exploits of the king of Sweden, and charmed her ear by theſe relations. The ſultaneſs, moved by that ſecret inclination with which moſt women feel themſelves inſpired in favour of extraordinary men, even without having ſeen them, openly eſpouſed the king's cauſe in the ſeraglio. She called him by no other name than that of her lion: "And when will you (would ſhe ſometimes ſay to the ſultan her ſon,) when will you help my lion to devour this czar?" She even diſpenſed with the rules of the ſeraglio, ſo far as to write ſeveral letters with her own hand to count Poniatowsky, in whoſe cuſtody they ſtill are, at the time of my writing this hiſtory.

Mean while the king was honourably conducted to Bender, thro' the deſert that was formerly called the Wilderneſs of the Getæ. The Turks took

took care that nothing ſhould be wanting on the road, to render his journey agreeable. A great many Poles, Swedes, and Coſſacks, who had eſcaped from the Muſcovites, came by different ways to increaſe his train on the road. By the time he reached Bender he had eighteen hundred men, who were all mantained and lodged, both they and their horſes, at the expence of the grand ſeignior.

The king choſe to encamp near Bender, rather than lodge in the town. The ſeraskier Juſſuf baſha cauſed a magnificent tent to be erected for him; and tents were likewiſe provided for all the lords of his retinue. Some time after, Charles built a houſe in this place; the officers followed his example; and the ſoldiers raiſed barracks; ſo that his camp inſenſibly became a little town. As the king was not yet cured of his wound, he was obliged to have a carious bone extracted from his foot. But as ſoon as he could mount a horſe, he reſumed his wonted labours, always riſing before the ſun, tiring three horſes a-day, and exerciſing his ſoldiers. By way of amuſement, he ſometimes played at cheſs; and, as the characters of men are often diſcovered by the moſt trifling incidents, it may not be improper to obſerve, that he always advanced the king firſt at that game, and made greater uſe of him than of any of the other men; by which he was always a loſer.

At Bender he had all the neceſſaries of life in great abundance, a felicity that ſeldom falls to the lot of a conquered and fugitive prince; for beſides the more than ſufficient quantity of proviſions, and the five hundred crowns a-day, which he received from the Ottoman munificence, he drew ſome money from France, and borrowed of the

the merchants at Conſtantinople. Part of this money was employed in forwarding his intrigues in the ſeraglio, in buying the favours of the viziers, or procuring their ruin. The reſt he ſquandered away with great profuſion among his own officers and the janiſſaries who compoſed his guards at Bender. The diſpenſer of theſe acts of liberality was Grothuſen, his favourite, a man, who, contrary to the cuſtom of perſons in that ſtation, was as fond of giving as his maſter. He once brought him an account of ſixty thouſand crowns in two lines; ten thouſand crowns given to the Swedes and janiſſaries by the generous orders of his majeſty, and the reſt eat up by myſelf: "It is thus (ſays the king) that I would have my friends to give in their accompts. Mullern makes me read whole pages for the ſum of ten thouſand livres. I like the laconic ſtile of Grothuſen much better." One of his old officers, who was ſuſpected of being ſomewhat covetous, complained that his majeſty gave all to Grothuſen: "I give money (replies the king) to none but thoſe who know how to uſe it." This generoſity frequently reduced him to ſuch a low ebb, that he had not wherewithal to give. A better oeconomy in his acts of generoſity would have been as much for his honour, and more for his intereſt; but it was the failing of this prince to carry all the virtues beyond the due bounds.

Great numbers of ſtrangers went from Conſtantinople to ſee him. The Turks and the neighbouring Tartars came thither in crouds: all reſpected and admired him. His inflexible reſolution to abſtain from wine, and his regularity in aſſiſting twice a-day at public prayers, made them

ſay that he was a true Muſſulman, and inſpired them with an ardent deſire of marching along with him to the conqueſt of Muſcovy.

During his abode at Bender, which was much longer than he expected, he inſenſibly acquired a taſte for reading. Baron Fabricius, a gentleman of the bed-chamber to the duke of Holſtein, a young man of an amiable character, who poſſeſſed that gaiety of temper, and eaſy turn of wit, which is ſo agreeable to princes, was the perſon who engaged him in theſe literary amuſements. He had been ſent to reſide with him at Bender in the character of envoy, to take care of the intereſts of the young duke of Holſtein; and he ſucceeded in his negociations by his open and agreeable behaviour. He had read all the beſt French authors. He perſuaded the king to read the tragedies of Peter Corneille, thoſe of Racine, and the works of Deſpreaux. The king had no reliſh for the ſatires of the laſt author, which indeed are far from being his beſt pieces; but he was very fond of his other writings. When he read that paſſage of the eighth ſatire, where the author treats Alexander as a fool and a madman, he tore out the leaf.

Of all the French tragedies, Mithridates pleaſed him moſt, becauſe the ſituation of that monarch, who, though vanquiſhed, ſtill breathed vengeance, was ſo ſimilar to his own. He ſhewed Mr. Fabricius the paſſages that ſtruck him; but would never read any of them aloud, nor ever hazard a ſingle word in French. Nay, when he afterwards ſaw Mr. Deſaleurs, the French ambaſſador at the Porte, a man of diſtinguiſhed merit, but acquainted only with his mother-tongue, he anſwered him in

in Latin; and when Mr. Deſaleurs proteſted that he did not underſtand four words of that language, the king, rather than talk French, ſent for an interpreter.

Such were the occupations of Charles XII. at Bender, where he waited till a Turkiſh army ſhould come to his aſſiſtance. His envoy preſented memorials in his name to the grand vizier; and Poniatowsky ſupported them with all his intereſt. This gentleman's addreſs ſucceeded in every thing; he was always dreſſed in the Turkiſh faſhion, and he had free acceſs to every place. The grand ſeignior preſented him with a purſe of a thouſand ducats, and the grand vizier ſaid to him, "I will take your king in one hand, and a ſword in the other; I will lead him to Moſcow at the head of two hundred thouſand men." The name of this grand vizier was Chourlouli Ali Baſha; he was the ſon of a peaſant of the village of Chourlou. Such an extraction is not reckoned a diſgrace among the Turks, who have no ranks of nobility, neither that which is annexed to certain employments, nor that which conſiſts in titles. With them the dignity and importance of a man's character depends entirely upon his perſonal ſervices. This is a cuſtom which prevails in moſt of the eaſtern countries; a cuſtom extremely natural, and which might be productive of the moſt beneficial effects, if poſts of honour were conferred on none but men of merit; but the viziers for the moſt part are no better than the creatures of a black eunuch, or a favourite female ſlave.

The firſt miniſter ſoon changed his mind. The king could do nothing but negociate, and the czar could give money, which he diſtributed with

great profuſion; and he even employed the money of Charles XII. on this occaſion. The military-cheſt which he took at Pultowa furniſhed him with new arms againſt the vanquiſhed king; and it was no longer the queſtion at court, whether war ſhould be made upon the Ruſſians? The intereſt of the czar was all-powerful at the Porte, which granted ſuch honours to his envoy as the Muſcovite miniſters had never before enjoyed at Conſtantinople. They allowed him to have a ſeraglio, that is, a palace in the quarter of the Franks, who converſe with the foreign miniſters. The czar thought he might even demand that general Mazeppa ſhould be put into his hands, as Charles XII. had cauſed the unhappy Patkul to be delivered up to him. Chourlouli Ali Baſha could refuſe nothing to a prince who backed his demands with millions. Thus that ſame grand vizier, who had formerly promiſed in the moſt ſolemn manner to lead the king of Sweden into Muſcovy with two hundred thouſand men, had the aſſurance to make him a propoſal of conſenting to the ſacrifice of general Mazeppa. Charles was enraged at this demand. It is hard to ſay how far the vizier might have puſhed the affair, had not Mazeppa, who was now ſeventy years of age, died exactly at this juncture. The king's grief and indignation were greatly encreaſed, when he underſtood that Tolſtoy, now become the czar's ambaſſador at the Porte, was ſerved in public by the Swedes that had been made ſlaves at Pultowa, and that the brave ſoldiers were daily ſold in the market at Conſtantinople. Nay, the Ruſſian ambaſſador made no ſcruple of declaring openly, that the Muſſulman troops at Bender were

were placed there rather with a view to ſecure the king's perſon, than to do him any honour.

Charles, abandoned by the grand vizier, and vanquiſhed by the czar's money in Turky, as he had been by his arms in the Ukraine, ſaw himſelf deceived and deſpiſed by the Porte, and almoſt a priſoner among the Tartars. His attendants began to deſpair. Himſelf alone remained firm, and never appeared in the leaſt dejected. Convinced that the ſultan was ignorant of the intrigues of Chourlouli Ali, his grand vizier, he reſolved to acquaint him with them; and Poniatowſky undertook the execution of this hazardous enterprize. The grand ſeignior goes every Friday to the moſque, ſurrounded by his ſolaks, a kind of guards, whoſe turbans are adorned with ſuch high feathers as to conceal the ſultan from the view of the people. When any one has a petition to preſent to the grand ſeignior, he endeavours to mingle with the guards, and holds the petition aloft. Sometimes the ſultan condeſcends to receive it himſelf; but for the moſt part he orders an aga to take charge of it, and upon his return from the moſque cauſes the petition to be laid before him. There is no fear of any one's daring to importune him with uſeleſs memorials and trifling petitions, inaſmuch as they write leſs at Conſtantinople in a whole year than they do at Paris in one day. There is ſtill leſs danger of any memorials being preſented againſt the miniſters, to whom he commonly remits them unread. Poniatowſky had no other way of conveying the king of Sweden's complaint to the grand ſeignior. He drew up a heavy charge againſt the grand vizier. Mr.

de Feriol, who was then the French ambaſſador, and who gave me an account of the whole affair, got the memorial tranſlated into the Turkiſh tongue. A Greek was hired to preſent it: this Greek mingling with the guards of the grand ſeignior, held the paper ſo high for ſo long a time, and made ſuch a noiſe, that the ſultan obſerved him and took the memorial himſelf.

This method of preſenting memorials to the ſultan againſt his viziers was frequently employed. A Swede, called Leloing, gave in another petition a few days after. Thus in the Turkiſh empire Charles XII. was reduced to the neceſſity of uſing the ſame expedients with an oppreſſed ſubject.

Some days after this, the ſultan ſent the king of Sweden, as the only anſwer to his complaints, five and twenty Arabian horſes, one of which, that had carried his highneſs, was covered with a ſaddle and houſing enriched with precious ſtones, with ſtirrups of maſſy gold. This preſent was accompanied with an obliging letter, but conceived in general terms, and ſuch as gave reaſon to ſuſpect that the miniſter had done nothing without the ſultan's conſent. Chourlouli too, who was a perfect maſter of the art of diſſimulation, ſent the king five very curious horſes. But Charles, with a lofty air, ſaid to the perſon that brought them; "Go back to your maſter, and tell him that I don't receive preſents from my enemies."

Poniatowsky having already ventured to preſent a petition againſt the grand viſier, he next formed the bold deſign of depoſing him. Underſtanding that the vizier was diſagreeable to the ſul-

ſultaneſs mother, and that he was hated by Kiſlar Aga, the chief of the black eunuchs, and by the aga of the janiſſaries, he prompted them all three to ſpeak againſt him. It was ſomething very ſurpriſing to ſee a Chriſtian, a Pole, an uncommiſſioned agent of the king of Sweden, who had taken refuge among the Turks, caballing almoſt openly at the Porte againſt a viceroy of the Ottoman empire, who, at the ſame time, was both an able miniſter and a favourite of his maſter. Poniatowsky could never have ſucceeded, and the bare attempt would have coſt him his life, had not a power ſuperior to all thoſe that operated in his favour given a finiſhing ſtroke to the fortune of the grand vizier Chourlouli.

The ſultan had a young favourite, who afterwards governed the Ottoman empire, and was killed in Hungary in 1716, at the battle of Peterwaradin, which prince Eugene of Savoy gained over the Turks. His name was Coumourgi Ali-Baſha: his birth was much the ſame with that of Chourlouli; being the ſon of a coal-heaver, as Coumourgi imports, Coumour in the Turkiſh tongue ſignifying coal. The emperor Achmet II. uncle of Achmet III. having met Coumourgi, while yet an infant, in a little wood near Adrianople, was ſtruck with his extraordinary beauty, and cauſed him to be conducted to the ſeraglio. Muſtapha, the eldeſt ſon and ſucceſſor of Mahomet, was very fond of him; and Achmet III. made him his favourite. He had then no other place but that of ſelictar-aga, or ſword-bearer to the crown. His extreme youth did not allow him to make any open pretenſions to the poſt of grand vizier; and yet he had the ambition to aſpire to

it. The Swediſh faction could never draw over this favourite to their ſide. He had never been a friend to Charles, or to any other Chriſtian prince, or to any of their miniſters; but on this occaſion he ſerved king Charles XII. without intending to do ſo. He joined with the ſultaneſs Valide and the great officers of the Porte, to haſten the ruin of Chourlouli, who was equally hated by them all. This old miniſter, who had ſerved his maſter for a long time, and with great fidelity, fell a victim to the caprice of a boy, and the intrigues of a foreigner. He was ſtripped of his dignity and riches. His wife, who was the daughter of the late ſultan Muſtapha, was taken from him; and himſelf was baniſhed to Caffa, formerly called Theodoſia, in Crim Tartary. The bull, that is to ſay, the ſeal of the empire, was given to Numan Couprougli, grandſon to the great Couprougli, who took Candia. This new vizier was, what ill-formed Chriſtians can hardly believe it poſſible for a Turk to be, a man of incorruptible virtue, a ſcrupulous obſerver of the law, and one who frequently oppoſed the rigid rules of juſtice to the wayward will of the ſultan. He could not endure to hear of a war againſt Muſcovy, which he conſidered as alike unjuſt and unneceſſary; but the ſame attachment to his law, that prevented his making war upon the czar, contrary to the faith of treaties, made him obſerve the rights of hoſpitality towards the king of Sweden. "The law forbids you, would he ſay to his maſter, to attack the czar, who has done you no injury; but it commands you to ſuccour the king of Sweden, who is an unfortunate prince in your dominions." He ſent his majeſty

jeſty eight hundred purſes, (every purſe containing five hundred crowns,) and adviſed him to return peaceably to his own dominions, either through the territories of the emperor of Germany, or in ſome of the French veſſels which then lay in the harbour of Conſtantinople, and which Mr. de Feriol, the French ambaſſador at the Porte, offered to Charles to conduct him to Marſeilles. Count Poniatowſky carried on his negociations with greater activity than ever, and acquired ſuch a ſuperiority with an incorruptible vizier, as the gold of the Muſcovites was unable to counterbalance. The Ruſſian faction thought it would be their wiſeſt courſe to poiſon ſuch a dangerous negociator. They gained one of his domeſtics, who was to give him the poiſon in a diſh of coffee; but the crime was diſcovered before it was carried into execution. The poiſon was found in the hands of the domeſtick, contained in a ſmall vial, which was carried to the grand ſeignior. The poiſoner was tried in a full divan, and condemned to the gallies; the juſtice of the Turks never inflicting death for thoſe crimes that have not been perpetrated.

Charles, who could not be perſuaded but that, ſooner or later, he ſhould be able to engage the Turkiſh empire in a war againſt Muſcovy, rejected every propoſal that was made for his peaceable return home. He was continually repreſenting to the Turks the formidable power of that ſame czar, whom he had ſo long deſpiſed. His emiſſaries were perpetually inſinuating that Peter Alexiowitz wanted to make himſelf maſter of the navigation of the Black Sea; and that after having ſubdued the Coſſacks, he would carry his arms into Crim Tartary. Sometimes theſe re-

preſentations arouſed the Porte, at others the Ruſſian miniſters deſtroyed all their effect.

While Charles XII. made his fate depend upon the caprice of viziers, and while he was alternately receiving favours and affronts from a foreign power, preſenting petitions to the ſultan, and ſubſiſting upon his bounty in a deſert, all his enemies, awakened from their former lethargy, invaded his dominions.

The battle of Pultowa was the firſt ſignal to a revolution in Poland. Auguſtus returned to that country, proteſting againſt his abdication, and the peace of Altranſtad, and publicly accuſing Charles XII. whom he no longer feared, of robbery and cruelty. He impriſoned Fingſten and Imhoff, his plenipotentiaries, who had ſigned his abdication, as if in ſo doing they had exceeded their orders, and betrayed their maſter. His Saxon troops, which had been the pretext of his dethronement, conducted him back to Warſaw, accompanied by moſt of the Poliſh palatines, who having formerly ſworn fidelity to him, had afterwards done the ſame to Staniſlaus, and were now come to do it again to Auguſtus. Siniawſki himſelf rejoined his party, and laying aſide the ambitious hopes of raiſing himſelf to the royal dignity, was content to remain grand-general of the crown. Fleming, his firſt miniſter, who had been obliged to leave Saxony, for fear of being delivered up with Patkul, now contributed by his addreſs to bring back to his maſter's intereſt a great part of the Poliſh nobility.

The pope abſolved the people from the oath of allegiance which they had taken to Staniſlaus. This ſtep of the holy father, ſeaſonably taken, and

and ſupported by the forces of Auguſtus, was of conſiderable weight. It ſtrengthened the credit of the court of Rome in Poland, the natives of which had no inclination at that time to diſpute with the ſovereign pontiffs their chimerical right of interfereing in the temporal concerns of princes. Every one was ready to ſubmit anew to the authority of Auguſtus, and willingly received an abſolution, which, however uſeleſs in itſelf, the nuncio took care to repreſent as abſolutely neceſſary.

The power of Charles and the grandeur of Sweden, were now drawing towards their laſt period. Above ten crowned heads had long beheld with fear and envy the Swediſh power extending itſelf far beyond its natural bounds, on the other ſide of the Baltic ſea, from the Duna to the Elbe. The fall of Charles, and his abſence, revived the intereſted views, and re-kindled the jealouſies of all theſe princes, which had for a long time been laid aſleep by treaties, and by their inability to break them.

The czar, who was more powerful than all of them put together, improving his late victory, took Vibourg, and all Carelia, over-run Finland, laid ſiege to Riga, and ſent a body of forces into Poland to aid Auguſtus in recovering his throne. The czar was, at that time what Charles had been formerly, the arbiter of Poland and the North; but all his meaſures were directed to the promotion of his own intereſt: whereas Charles had never been prompted by any other motive than thoſe of revenge and glory. The Swediſh monarch had ſuccoured his allies and cruſhed his enemies, without reaping any fruit from his vic-

tories. The czar behaving more like a prince, and leſs like a hero, would not aſſiſt the king of Poland, but on condition that Livonia ſhould be ceded to him; and that that province, for which Auguſtus had kindled the war, ſhould remain for ever in the poſſeſſion of the Muſcovites.

The king of Denmark, forgetting the treaty of Travendal, as Auguſtus had that of Altranſtad, began to entertain thoughts of making himſelf maſter of the dutchies of Holſtein and Bremen, to which he renewed his pretenſions. The king of Pruſſia had ancient claims upon Swediſh Pomerania, which he now reſolved to revive. The duke of Mecklenburg was vexed to ſee that the Swedes were ſtill in poſſeſſion of Wiſmar, the fineſt town in the dutchy. This prince was to marr a niece of the Ruſſian emperor; and the czar wanted only a pretext for eſtabliſhing himſelf in Germany, after the example of the Swedes. George, elector of Hanover, was likewiſe deſirous of enriching himſelf with Charles's ſpoils. The biſhop of Munſter too would have been willing enough to avail himſelf of ſome of his claims, had he been able to ſupport them.

About twelve or thirteen thouſand Swedes defended Pomerania, and the other countries which Charles poſſeſſed in Germany; and it was there that the war was moſt likely to begin. This ſtorm alarmed the emperor and his allies. It is a law of the empire, that whoever invades one of its provinces ſhall be reputed an enemy to the whole Germanic body.

But there was a ſtill greater difficulty. All theſe princes, except the czar, were then united againſt Lewis XIV. whoſe power, for a long time, had

had been as formidable to the empire as that of Charles.

At the beginning of this century, Germany found itſelf hard preſſed from ſouth to north by the armies of France and Sweden. The French had paſſed the Danube, and the Swedes the Oder, and had their forces, victorious as they then were, been joined together, the empire had been utterly undone. But the ſame fatality that ruined Sweden had likewiſe humbled France. Sweden, however, had ſtill ſome reſources left; and Lewis XIV. carried on the war with vigour, though without ſucceſs. Should Pomerania and the dutchy of Bremen become the theatre of the war, it was to be feared that the empire would ſuffer by ſuch an event; and that being weakened on that ſide, it would be leſs able to withſtand the arms of Lewis XIV. To prevent this danger, the emperor, the princes of the empire, Anne queen of England, and the ſtates-general of the United Provinces concluded at the Hague, about the end of the year 1709, one of the moſt ſingular treaties that ever was ſigned.

It was ſtipulated by theſe powers, that the war againſt the Swedes ſhould not be in Pomerania, nor in any of the German provinces; and that the enemies of Charles XII. ſhould be at liberty to attack him any where elſe. Even the czar and the king of Poland acceded to this treaty, in which they cauſed to be inſerted an article as extraordinary as the treaty itſelf, viz. that the twelve thouſand Swedes who were in Pomerania ſhould not be allowed to leave it in order to defend their other provinces.

To ſecure the execution of the treaty, and to maintain this imaginary neutrality, it was pro-

poſed

poſed to aſſemble an army, which ſhould encamp on the banks of the Oder. An unheard-of novelty ſure, to levy an army in order to prevent a war! nay, the very princes who were to pay the army, were moſt of them concerned to commence the war which they thus affected to prevent. The treaty imported that the army ſhould be compoſed of the troops of the emperor, of the king of Pruſſia, of the elector of Hanover, of the landgrave of Heſſe, and of the biſhop of Munſter.

The iſſue of this project was ſuch as might naturally have been expected: it was not carried into execution. The princes who were to have furniſhed their contingents for compleating the army, contributed nothing. There were not two regiments formed. Every body talked of a neutrality, but no body obſerved it; and the princes of the North, who had any quarrel with the king of Sweden, were left at full liberty to diſpute with each other the ſpoils of that prince.

During theſe tranſactions, the czar having quartered his troops in Lithuania, and given orders for puſhing the ſiege of Riga, returned to Moſcow to ſhew his people a fight as new as any thing he had hitherto done in the kingdom. This was a triumph of nearly the ſame nature with that of the ancient Romans. He made his entry into Moſcow on the firſt of January, 1710, under ſeven triumphant arches, erected in the ſtreets, and adorned with every thing which the climate could furniſh, or which a flouriſhing commerce (rendered ſuch by his care) could import. The *proceſſion* began with a regiment of guards, followed

lowed by the pieces of artillery taken from the Swedes at Leſno and Pultowa, each of which was drawn by eight horſes, covered with ſcarlet houſings hanging down to the ground. Next came the ſtandards, kettle-drums, and colours won at theſe two battles, carried by the officers and ſoldiers who had taken them. All theſe ſpoils were followed by the fineſt troops of the czar. After they had filed off, there appeared in a chariot, made on purpoſe*, the litter of Charles XII. found in the field of battle at Pultowa, all ſhattered with two cannon ſhot. Behind the litter marched all the priſoners two and two, among whom was count Piper, firſt miniſter of Sweden, the famous mareſchal Renſchild, the count de Levenhaupt, the generals Slipenback, Stackelberg, and Hamilton, and all the officers, who were afterwards diſperſed through Great Ruſſia. Immediately after theſe appeared the czar himſelf, mounted on the ſame horſe which he rode at the battle of Pultowa: a little after him came the generals who had had a ſhare in the ſucceſs of the day. Next followed a regiment of guards; and the whole was cloſed by the waggons loaded with the Swediſh ammunition.

This grand proceſſion was accompanied with the ringing of all the bells in Moſcow, with the ſound of drums, kettle-drums, trumpets, and an infinite number of muſical inſtruments, which played

* Here Mr. Norberg, the confeſſor of Charles XII. finds fault with the author, and affirms that the litter was carried by the ſoldiers. With regard to theſe circumſtances (which are of great importance to be ſure) we appeal to thoſe who ſaw them.

in concert, together with the vollies of two hundred pieces of cannon, amidſt the acclamations of five hundred thouſand men, who, at every ſtop the czar made in this triumphal entry, cried out, "Long live the emperor our father."

This dazzling exhibition augmented the people's veneration for his perſon, and perhaps made him appear greater in their eyes than all the ſolid advantages they had derived from his labours. Mean while he continued the blockade of Riga; and the generals made themſelves maſters of the reſt of Livonia and part of Finland. At the ſame time the king of Denmark came with his whole fleet to make a deſcent upon Sweden, where he landed ſeventeen thouſand men, and left them under the command of the count de Reventlau.

Sweden was, at that time, governed by a regency, compoſed of ſome ſenators, who were appointed by the king before he left Stockholm. The body of the ſenate, imagining that the government of right belonged to them, became jealous of the regency; and the ſtate ſuffered by theſe diviſions. But, when after the battle of Pultowa, the firſt news was brought to Stockholm, that the king was at Bender, at the mercy of the Turks and Tartars, and that the Danes had invaded Schonen, and taken the town of Helſimburg, all their jealouſies immediately vaniſhed, and they bent their whole attention towards the preſervation of the kingdom. Sweden was now drained, in a great meaſure, of regular troops; for though Charles had always made his great expeditions at the head of ſmall armies, yet the innumerable battles he had fought in the ſpace of

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nine years, the neceſſity he was under of recruiting his forces with continual ſupplies, and maintaining his garriſons, and the ſtanding army he was conſtantly obliged to keep in Finland, Ingria, Livonia, Pomerania, Bremen, and Verden; all theſe particulars had coſt Sweden, during the courſe of the war, above two hundred and fifty thouſand men; ſo that there were not eight thouſand of the ancient troops remaining, which, together with the new-raiſed militia, was the only reſources Sweden had to truſt to for the defence of her territories.

The nation is naturally warlike; and all ſubjects inſenſibly imbibe the ſpirit of their ſovereign. From one end of the country to the other nothing was talked of but the prodigious atchievements of Charles and his generals, and of the old regiments that fought under them at Narva, Duna, Cliſſau, Pultuſk, and Holloſin. Hence the very loweſt of the Swedes were fired with a ſpirit of emulation and glory; and this heroic impulſe was greatly augmented by their affection for their king, their pity for his misfortunes, and their implacable hatred to the Danes. In ſeveral other countries the peaſants are ſlaves, or treated as ſuch; but here they compoſe a part of the ſtate, are conſidered as citizens, and, of conſequence, are capable of more exalted ſentiments; ſo that theſe new-raiſed militia became, in a ſhort time, the beſt troops of the North.

General Steinbock, by order of the regency, put himſelf at the head of eight thouſand of the ancient troops, and about twelve thouſand of theſe new militia, to go in purſuit of the Danes, who ravaged all the country about Elſinburg, and

and had already extorted contributions from ſome of the more inland provinces.

There was neither time nor opportunity to give regimental cloaths to the new militia. Moſt of theſe boors came in their flaxen frocks, having piſtols tied to their girdles with cords. Steinbock, at the head of this ſtrange army, overtook the Danes about three leagues from Elſinburg on the tenth of March, 1710. He had deſigned to give his troops a few days reſt, to raiſe intrenchments, and to allow his new ſoldiers a ſufficient time to habituate themſelves to the face of the enemy; but all the peaſants called out for battle the very day on which they arrived.

I have been aſſured by ſome of the officers who were preſent, that they ſaw almoſt every individual ſoldier foaming with rage and choler; ſo great is the national hatred of the Swedes to the Danes. Steinbock availed himſelf of this ardour of ſpirit, which, in the day of battle, is of as much conſequence as military diſcipline. He attacked the Danes; and there one might have ſeen a thing, to which, perhaps, the whole hiſtory of mankind cannot furniſh above two ſimilar examples; the new-raiſed militia, in their firſt aſſault, equalled the intrepidity of veteran ſoldiers. Two regiments of theſe undiſciplined peaſants cut in pieces the regiment of the king of Denmark's guards, of which there remained only ten men alive.

The Danes, being entirely routed, retired under the cannon of Elſinburg. The paſſage from Sweden to Zealand is ſo ſhort, that the king of Denmark received the news of the defeat of his army in Sweden the ſame day on which it happened; and

and ſent his fleet to bring off the ſhattered remains of his army. The Danes quitted Sweden with precipitation five days after the battle; but unable to carry off their horſes, and unwilling to leave them to the enemy, they killed them all in the ſuburbs in Elſinburg, and ſet fire to their proviſions, burning their corn and baggage, and leaving in Elſinburg four thouſand wounded, the greateſt part of whom died of the infection, occaſioned by ſo many dead horſes and for want of proviſion, of which even their countrymen deprived them, in order to prevent the Swedes from enjoying any ſhare of it.

Mean while, the peaſants of Dalecarlia having heard in the heart of their foreſts, that their king was a priſoner among the Turks, ſent a deputation to the regency of Stockholm, and offered to go at their own expence, to the number of twenty thouſand men, to reſcue their maſter from the hands of his enemies. This propoſal, which was better calculated to expreſs their courage and loyalty, than to produce any real advantage, was received with pleaſure, though it was not accepted; and the ſenators took care to acquaint the king with it, at the ſame time that they ſent him a circumſtantial account of the battle of Elſinburg.

Charles received this agreeable news in his camp near Bender, in July, 1710. And another event that happened ſoon after contributed ſtill more to ſtrengthen his hopes.

The grand vizier, Couprougli, who oppoſed all his deſigns, was diſmiſſed from his office, after having filled it for two months. The little court of Charles XII. and thoſe who ſtill adhered to him

him in Poland, gave out that Charles made and unmade the viziers, and governed the Turkiſh empire from his retreat at Bender. But he had no hand in the diſgrace of that favourite. The rigid probity of the vizier was ſaid to have been the ſole cauſe of his fall. His predeceſſor had paid the Janiſſaries not out of the Imperial treaſury, but with the money which he procured by extortion. Couprougli paid them out of the treaſury. Achmet reproached him with preferring the intereſts of the ſubject to that of the emperor: "Your predeceſſors, ſaid he, well knew how to find other means of paying my troops." "If, replied the grand vizier, he had the art of enriching your highneſs by rapine, it is an art of which I am proud to ſay I am entirely ignorant."

The profound ſecrecy that prevails in the ſeraglio, ſeldom allows ſuch particulars to tranſpire to the publick; but this fact was publiſhed along with Couprougli's diſgrace. The vizier's boldneſs did not coſt him his head, becauſe true virtue is ſometimes reſpected, even while it diſpleaſes. He was permitted to retire to the iſland of Negropont. Theſe particulars I learned from the letters of Mr. Bru, my relation, firſt druggiſt to the Ottoman Porte, and I have retold them in order to diſplay the true ſpirit of that government.

After this the grand ſeignior recalled from Aleppo Baltagi Mehemet, baſha of Syria, who had been grand vizier before Chourlouli. The baltagis of the ſeraglio ſo called from balta, which ſignifies an axe, are ſlaves employed to cut wood for the uſe of the princes of the Ottoman blood,

blood, and the ſultanas. This vizier had been a baltagi in his youth, and had ever ſince retained the name of that office, according to the cuſtom of the Turks, who are not aſhamed to take the name of their firſt profeſſion, or of that of their father, or even of the place of their birth.

While Baltagi Mehemet was a valet in the ſeraglio, he was ſo happy as to perform ſome little ſervices to prince Achmet, who was then a priſoner of ſtate in the reign of his brother Muſtapha. The princes of the Ottoman blood are allowed to keep for their pleaſure a few women, who are paſt the age of child-bearing, (and that age arrives very early in Turky) but ſtill agreeable enough to pleaſe. As ſoon as Achmet became ſultan, he gave one of theſe female ſlaves, for whom he had had a great affection, in marriage to Baltagi Mehemet. This woman by her intrigues made her huſband grand vizier; another intrigue diſplaced him; and a third made him grand vizier again.

When Baltagi Mehemet received the bull of the empire, he found the party of the king of Sweden prevailing in the ſeraglio. The ſultaneſs Valide, Ali Coumourgi, the grand ſeignior's favourite, the kiſlar aga, chief of the black eunuchs, and the aga of the janiſſaries were all for a war againſt the czar: the ſultan was fixed in the ſame reſolution; and the firſt order he gave the grand vizier was to go and attack the Muſcovites with two hundred thouſand men. Baltagi had never made a campaign; yet was he not an ideot, as the Swedes, who were diſſatisfied with his conduct, affected to repreſent him. Upon receiving

ceiving from the grand ſeignior a ſabre, adorned with precious ſtones, he addreſſed him in the following terms: "Your highneſs knows, ſaid he, that I was brought up to handle an axe and cleave wood, not to wield a ſword and command your armies. Nevertheleſs, I will endeavour to ſerve you to the beſt of my power; but ſhould I fail of ſucceſs, remember I have entreated you beforehand not to impute the blame to me." The ſultan aſſured him he might depend upon his friendſhip; and the vizier prepared to carry his orders into execution.

The firſt ſtep of the Ottoman Porte was to impriſon the Ruſſian ambaſſador in the caſtle of the Seven Towers. 'Tis the cuſtom of the Turks to begin by arreſting the miniſters of thoſe princes againſt whom they declare war. Strict obſervers of hoſpitality in every thing elſe, in this they violate the moſt ſacred law of nations. This injuſtice, however, they commit under the pretext of equity, believing themſelves, or, at leaſt, deſirous to make others believe, that they never undertake any but juſt wars, becauſe they are conſecrated by the approbation of their muſti. Upon this principle they take up arms (as they imagine) to chaſtiſe the violators of treaties; and think they have a right to puniſh the ambaſſadors of thoſe kings with whom they are at enmity, as being accomplices in the treachery of their maſters.

Add to this the ridiculous contempt they affect to entertain for Chriſtian princes, and their ambaſſadors, the latter of whom they commonly conſider in no other light than as the conſuls of merchants.

The

The han of Crim Tartary, whom we call the kam, received orders to hold himſelf in readineſs with forty thouſand Tartars. This prince is ſovereign of Nagaï, Budziack, part of Circaſſia, and all Crim Tartary, a province anciently known by the name of Taurica Cherſoneſus, into which the Greeks carried their arms and commerce, and founded powerful cities; and into which, in after times, the Genoeſe penetrated, when they were maſters of the trade of Europe. In this country are to be ſeen the ruins of ſome Greek cities, and ſome monuments of the Genoeſe, which ſtill ſubſiſt in the midſt of deſolation and barbarity.

The kam is called emperor by his own ſubjects; but with this grand title, he is, nevertheleſs, the ſlave of the Porte. The Ottoman blood, from which the kams are ſprung, and the right they pretend to have to the empire of the Turks, upon the failure of the grand ſeignior's race, render their family reſpectable, and their perſons formidable even to the ſultan himſelf. 'Tis for this reaſon that the grand ſeignior dares not venture to deſtroy the race of the kams of Tartary; though indeed he ſeldom allows any of theſe princes to live to a great age. Their conduct is cloſely inſpected by the neighbouring baſha's: their dominions are ſurrounded with janiſſaries; their inclinations thwarted by the grand viziers; and their deſigns always ſuſpected. If the Tartars complain of the kam, the Porte depoſes him under that pretext. If he is too popular, it is ſtill a higher crime, for which he ſuffers a more ſevere puniſhment. Thus almoſt all of them are driven from ſovereign power into exile, and end their days at Rhodes,

Rhodes, which is commonly their priſon and their grave.

The Tartars, their ſubjects, are the moſt thieviſh people on earth, and, what is hardly to be credited, are, at the ſame time, the moſt hoſpitable. They will go fifty leagues from home to attack a caravan, or pillage a town; and yet when any ſtranger happens to travel through their country, he is not only received, lodged, and maintained every where, but through whatever place he paſſes, the inhabitants diſpute with each other the honour of having him for their gueſt; and the maſter of the houſe, his wife, and daughters, are ambitious to ſerve him. This inviolable regard to hoſpitality they have derived from their anceſtors the Scythians; and they ſtill preſerve it, becauſe the ſmall number of ſtrangers that travel among them, and the low price of all ſorts of proviſions, render the practice of ſuch a virtue no ways burthenſome.

When the Tartars go to war, in conjunction with the Ottoman army, they are maintained by the grand ſeignior, but the booty they get is their only pay; and hence it is that they are much fitter for plundering than fighting.

The kam, won over to the king of Sweden's intereſt by preſents and promiſes, at firſt obtained leave to appoint the general rendezvous of the troops at Bender, and even under the eye of Charles XII. in order the more effectually to convince that monarch, that the war was undertaken ſolely for his ſake.

The new vizier, Baltagi Mehemet, who did not lie under the ſame engagements, would not flatter a foreign prince ſo highly. He changed the order

order; and Adrianople was the place fixed for the rendezvous of this great army. 'Tis always in the vaſt and fertile plains of Adrianople that the Turks aſſemble their armies, when they are going to make war upon the Chriſtians: there the troops that arrive from Aſia and Africa repoſe and refreſh themſelves for a few weeks; but the grand vizier, in order to anticipate the preparations of the czar, allowed the army but three days reſt, and then marched to the Danube, from whence he advanced into Beſſarabia.

The Turkiſh troops now-a-days are not near ſo formidable as they were in ancient times, when they conquered ſo many kingdoms in Aſia, Africa, and Europe; when, by their great ſtrength of body, their valour, and numbers, they triumphed over enemies leſs robuſt and worſe diſciplined than themſelves. But now that the Chriſtians are more expert in the art of war, they ſeldom fail to beat the Turks in a pitched battle, and even with unequal numbers. If the Ottoman empire hath made ſome conqueſts in latter times, it hath only been over the republic of Venice, eſteemed more wiſe than warlike, defended by ſtrangers, and little ſuccoured by the Chriſtian princes, who are perpetually at variance among themſelves.

The janiſſaries and ſpahis always attack in a confuſed and diſorderly manner: they are incapable of obeying the commands of their general, or of recovering their ranks. Their cavalry, which, conſidering the goodneſs and fleetneſs of their horſes, ought to be excellent, is unable to ſuſtain the ſhock of the German cavalry. Their infantry cannot, even to this day, make uſe of

fixed bayonets to any purpoſe. Add to this that the Turks have not had an able general ſince the time of Couprougli, who conquered the iſle of Candia A ſlave brought up in the indolence and ſilence of a ſeraglio, made a vizier by intereſt, and a general againſt his will, led a raw army, without diſcipline or experience, againſt Ruſſian troops, hardened by twelve campaigns, and proud of having conquered the Swedes.

The czar, in all appearance, muſt have vanquiſhed Baltagi Mehemet; but was guilty of the ſame fault, with regard to the Turks, which the king of Sweden had committed with regard to him: he deſpiſed his enemy too much. Upon the firſt news of the Turkiſh preparations, he left Moſcow, and, having given orders for turning the ſiege of Riga into a blockade, aſſembled a body of eighty thouſand men on the frontiers of Poland *. With this army he took the road through

* The chaplain Norberg alledges, that the czar compelled every fourth man in his dominions, able to bear arms, to follow him to the field. Had that been the caſe, his army would have amounted, at leaſt, to two millions of men †.

† Our author ſeems to have forgot himſelf on this occaſion. In civilized and populous countries, one fifth of the inhabitants is computed as the proportion of men able to carry arms. M. de Voltaire ſays, the number of people in Muſcovy does not exceed fourteen or fifteen millions. The fifth part of fifteen amounts to three; every fourth man, therefore, if choſe fit for war, would bring the number to ſeven hundred and fifty thouſand. But great part of the czar's ſubjects conſiſted of people who never ſerved in war; ſuch as the Laplanders, the Samoiedes, and the clergy: ſo that we muſt underſtand Norberg as meaning

through Moldavia and Walachia, formerly the country of the Dacee, but now inhabited by Greek Chriſtians, who are tributaries to the grand ſeignior.

Moldavia was, at that time, governed by prince Cantemir, a Grecian by birth, and who united in his perſon the talents of the ancient Greeks, the knowledge of letters and of arms. He was ſuppoſed to have ſprung from the famous Timur, known by the name of Tamerlane. This extraction appeared more honourable than a Greek origin; and the reality of the deſcent is proved by the name of the conqueror. Timur, it is ſaid, reſembles Temir: the title of Can, which Timur poſſeſſed before he conquered Aſia, is included in the word Cantemir: therefore prince Cantemir is deſcended from Tamerlane. Such are the foundations of moſt genealogies!

From whatever family Cantemir was ſprung, he owed all his fortune to the Ottoman Porte. Hardly had he received the inveſtiture of his principality, when he betrayed his benefactor the Turkiſh emperor to the czar, from whom he expected greater advantages. He fondly imagined that the conqueror of Charles XII. would eaſily triumph over a vizier of ſo little reputation, who had never made a campaign, and who had choſen for his Kiaia, or lieutenant, the ſuperintendant of the cuſtoms in Turky. He made no queſtion but all his ſubjects would readily follow his ſtandard, as the Greek patriarchs encouraged him in

meaning no more than that Peter enliſted every fourth man of the peaſants actually found in the country, properly called Muſcovy.

his revolt. The czar, therefore, having made a ſecret treaty with this prince, and received him into his army, advanced farther into the country; and in June 1711, arrived on the northern banks of the river Hieraſus, now Pruth, near Jazy, the capital of Moldavia.

As ſoon as the grand vizier heard that Peter Alexiowitz was advancing on that ſide, he immediately decamped, and following the courſe of the Danube, reſolved to croſs the river on a bridge of boats, near a town called Saccia, at the ſame place where Darius formerly built the bridge that long went by his name. The Turkiſh army proceeded with ſo much expedition, that it ſoon came in ſight of the Muſcovites, the river Pruth being between them.

The czar, ſure of the prince of Moldavia, never dreamed that the Moldavians would fail him. But it frequently happens that the intereſt of the prince and that of the ſubjects are extremely different. The Moldavians liked the Turkiſh government, which is never fatal to any but the grandees, and affects a great lenity and mildneſs to its tributary ſtates. They dreaded the Chriſtians, and eſpecially the Muſcovites, who had always treated them with inhumanity. They carried all their proviſions to the Ottoman army.

The undertakers who had engaged to furniſh the Ruſſians with proviſions, performed that contract with the grand vizier which they had made with the czar. The Walachians, who border upon the Moldavians, diſcovered the ſame attachment to the Turks; ſo much had the remembrance of the Ruſſian cruelty alienated all their affections.

The

The czar thus baulked of his hopes, which perhaps he had too raſhly entertained, ſaw his army on a ſudden deſtitute of forage and proviſions. The ſoldiers deſerted in troops; and the army was ſoon reduced to leſs than thirty thouſand men, ready to periſh with hunger. The czar experienced the ſame misfortunes upon the banks of the Pruth, in having delivered himſelf up to Cantemir, that Charles XII. had done at Pultowa, in relying upon Mazeppa. The Turks mean while paſſed the river, hemmed in the Ruſſians, and formed an entrenched camp before them. It is ſomewhat ſurpriſing that the czar did not diſpute the paſſage of the river, or, at leaſt, repair this error by attacking the Turks immediately after the paſſage, inſtead of giving them time to deſtroy his army by hunger and fatigue. It would ſeem, indeed, that Peter did every thing in this campaign to haſten his own ruin. He found himſelf without proviſion; the river Pruth behind him; an hundred and fifty thouſand Turks before him; while forty thouſand Tartars were continually harraſſing his army on the right and left. In this extremity, he made no ſcruple of acknowledging in public, that he was at leaſt reduced to as bad a condition as his brother Charles had been at Pultowa.

Count Poniatowſky, an indefatigable agent of the king of Sweden, was in the grand vizier's army, together with ſome Poles and Swedes, all of whom conſidered the ruin of the czar as inevitable.

As ſoon as Poniatowſky ſaw that the armies muſt infallibly come to an engagement, he ſent an expreſs to the king of Sweden, who immedi-

ately ſet out from Bender, accompanied with forty officers, anticipating the mighty pleaſure he ſhould have in fighting the emperor of Muſcovy. After many loſſes, and ſeveral marches in which he ſuffered ſeverely, the czar was driven back to the Pruth, without any other defence than a chevaux de frize, and a few waggons. A part of the janiſſaries and ſpahis attacked his army in this diſadvantageous ſituation; but their attack was diſorderly, and the Ruſſians defended themſelves with a firmneſs and reſolution, which nothing but deſpair and the preſence of their prince could inſpire.

The Turks were twice repulſed. Next day Mr. Poniatowsky adviſed the grand vizier to ſtarve the Ruſſian army, which being in want of every thing, would, together with its emperor, be obliged in a day's time to ſurrender at diſcretion.

The czar, ſince that time, hath more than once acknowledged, that, in the whole courſe of his life, he never felt any thing ſo exquiſitely tormenting as the perturbation of mind in which he paſſed that night. He revolved in his thoughts all that he had been doing for ſo many years, to promote the glory and happineſs of his country. He reflected that ſo many grand undertakings, which had always been interrupted by wars, were now, perhaps, going to periſh with him, before they were fully accompliſhed. And he plainly perceived, that he muſt either be deſtroyed by famine, or attack about an hundred and eighty thouſand men with feeble and diſpirited troops, diminiſhed one half in their number, the cavalry almoſt entirely diſmounted, and the infantry exhauſted with hunger and fatigue.

He

He ſent for general Czeremetof in the evening, and, without the leaſt heſitation, or even ſo much as asking any one's advice, ordered him to have every thing in readineſs next morning for attacking the Turks with fixed bayonets.

He likewiſe gave expreſs orders that all the baggage ſhould be burnt, and that no officer ſhould keep above one waggon; that ſo, in caſe of a defeat, the enemy might not obtain the booty they expected.

Having ſettled every thing with the general relating to the battle, he retired to his tent, oppreſſed with grief, and racked with convulſions, a diſeaſe which often attacked him, and always recurred with redoubled violence, when he was under any perturbation of mind. He gave peremptory orders that no one ſhould preſume, under any pretext whatſoever, to enter his tent in the night; not chuſing to receive any remonſtrances againſt a reſolution, which, however deſperate, was abſolutely neceſſary, and ſtill leſs that any one ſhould be a witneſs of the melancholy condition in which he was.

Mean while the greateſt part of the baggage was burnt, according to his orders. All the army followed the example, though with much reluctance; and ſeveral buried their moſt valuable effects in the earth. The general officers were already giving orders for the march, and endeavouring to inſpire the army with that courage which themſelves did not poſſeſs. The ſoldiers, exhauſted with hunger and fatigue, advanced without ſpirit and without hope. The women, with which the army was but too much crouded, ſet up the moſt lamentable ſhrieks and cries,

which contributed ſtill more to enervate the men; and next morning every one expected death or ſlavery, as the only alternative. This picture is by no means exaggerated: it is exactly agreeable to the accounts that were given by ſome officers who ſerved in the army.

There was, at that time, in the Ruſſian camp, a woman as extraordinary, perhaps, as the czar himſelf. As yet ſhe was known only by the name of Catharine. Her mother was a poor country-woman, called Erb-Magden, of the village of Ringen in Eſtonia, a province where the people held by villenage, and which was then ſubject to the Swedes. She never knew her father; but was baptized by the name of Martha. The vicar of the pariſh, out of pure charity, brought her up to the age of fourteen; after which ſhe went to ſervice at Marienburg, and hired herſelf to a Lutheran miniſter of that country, called Gluk.

In 1702, being then eighteen years of age, ſhe married a Swediſh dragoon. The day immediately ſucceeding her marriage, a party of the Swediſh troops having been defeated by the Muſcovites, the dragoon, who was in the action, diſappeared, and was never heard of more; but whether or not he was taken priſoner, his wife could never learn, nor indeed from that time could ſhe ever procure the leaſt intelligence about him.

A few days after, being made a priſoner herſelf by general Baur, ſhe entered into his ſervice, and afterwards into that of mareſchal Czeremetof, by whom ſhe was given to Menzikoff, a man who experienced the greateſt viciſſitudes of fortune, having from a paſtry-cook's boy been raiſed

raiſed to the rank of a general and a prince, and at laſt ſtripped of every thing and baniſhed into Siberia, where he ended his days in miſery and deſpair.

The firſt time the emperor ſaw her was one evening as he was at ſupper with prince Menzikoff, when he inſtantly fell in love with her. He married her privately in 1707: not ſeduced into this ſtep by the artifices of the woman, but becauſe he found her poſſeſſed of a ſtrength and firmneſs of mind capable of ſeconding his ſchemes, and even of continuing them after his death. He had long before divorced his firſt wife Ottokeſa, the daughter of a boyard, who was accuſed of oppoſing the alterations which he was introducing into his dominions. This crime, in the eyes of the czar, was the moſt heinous of all others. He would have no body in his family whoſe thoughts did not exactly correſpond with his. He imagined he could diſcern in this foreign ſlave the qualities of a ſovereign, though ſhe had none of the virtues of her ſex. For her ſake he diſdained and broke through the prejudices that would have fettered a man of an ordinary capacity. He cauſed her to be crowned empreſs. The ſame talents which made her the wife of Peter Alexiowitz, procured her the empire after the death of her huſband; and Europe hath beheld with ſurprize a woman who could neither read* nor write, com-

* The Sieur de la Motraye pretends that ſhe had a good education, and could both read and write with great facility. The contrary of this, however, is known to all the world. The peaſants of Livonia are never allowed to learn

compenſating the want of education, and the weakneſs of her ſex, by her invincible courage and reſolution, and filling with glory the throne of a legiſlator.

When ſhe married the czar, ſhe renounced the Lutheran religion, in which ſhe had been born, and embraced that of Muſcovy. She was re-baptized, according to the rules of the Ruſſian church, and inſtead of Martha, ſhe took the name of Catharine, by which ſhe was ever after known. This woman, being at the camp at Pruth, held a council with the general officers and the vice-chancellor, Schaffirof, while the czar was in his tent.

The reſult of their deliberations was, that they muſt neceſſarily ſue for a peace to the Turks, and endeavour to perſuade the czar to agree to ſuch a meaſure. The vice-chancellor wrote a letter to the grand vizier in his maſter's name. This letter the czarina carried to the emperor's tent, notwithſtanding his prohibition; and having with tears and intreaties prevailed upon him to ſign it, ſhe forthwith collected all her jewels, money, and moſt valuable effects, together with what money ſhe could borrow from the general officers, and having by theſe means made up a conſiderable preſent, ſhe ſent it, with the czar's

learn either to read or write, owing to an ancient privilege, which is termed the benefit of clergy, formerly eſtabliſhed among the barbarians who were converted to Chriſtianity, and ſtill ſubſiſting in this country. The memoirs from which we have extracted this anecdote, farther add, that the princeſs Elizabeth, afterwards empreſs, always ſigned for her mother, from the time ſhe could write.

letter

letter, to Oſman Aga, lieutenant to the grand vizier. Mehemet Baltagi replied with the lofty air of a vizier and a conqueror, "Let the czar ſend me his prime miniſter, and I ſhall then conſider what is to be done." The vice-chancellor, Schaffirof, immediately repaired to the Turkiſh camp, with ſome preſents which he publicly offered to the grand vizier, ſufficient to ſhew him that they ſtood in need of his clemency, but too inconſiderable to corrupt his integrity.

The vizier at firſt demanded, that the czar, with his whole army, ſhould ſurrender at diſcretion. The vice-chancellor replied, that his maſter was going to attack him in a quarter of an hour, and that the Ruſſians would periſh to a man, rather than ſubmit to ſuch diſhonourable conditions. Schaffirof's application was ſtrongly ſeconded by the remonſtrances of Oſman.

Mehemet Baltagi was no warrior: he ſaw that the janiſſaries had been repulſed the day before; ſo that Oſman eaſily prevailed upon him not to riſk ſuch certain advantages upon the fate of a battle. He accordingly granted a ſuſpenſion of arms for ſix hours, in which time the terms of the treaty might be fully ſettled.

During the parley, there happened a trifling incident, which plainly ſhews that the Turks often keep their word with a more ſcrupulous exactneſs than we imagine. Two Italian gentlemen, relations of M. Brillo, lieutenant-colonel of a regiment of grenadiers in the czar's ſervice, having gone to ſome diſtance in queſt of forage, were taken priſoners by ſome Tartars, who brought them to the camp, and offered to ſell them to an officer of the janiſſaries. The Turk en-

enraged at their preſumption, in having thus violated the truce, arreſted the Tartars, and carried them himſelf before the grand vizier, together with the two priſoners.

The vizier ſent back the two gentlemen to the czar's camp, and ordered the Tartars, who had been chiefly concerned in carrying them off, to be beheaded.

Mean while the Kam of Tartary oppoſed the concluſion of the treaty, which would deprive him of all hopes of plunder; and Poniatowſky ſeconded the Kam with the ſtrongeſt arguments. But Oſman carried his point againſt the importunity of the Tartar, and the inſinuations of Poniatowſky.

The vizier thought, that by concluding an advantageous peace, he ſhould ſufficiently conſult the honour and intereſt of his maſter. He inſiſted that the Ruſſians ſhould reſtore Azoph, burn the gallies which lay in that harbour, demoliſh the important citadels built upon the Palus Mæotis, and deliver all the cannon and ammunition of theſe fortreſſes into the hands of the grand ſeignior; that the czar ſhould withdraw his troops from Poland, give no farther diſturbance to the few Coſſacks that were under the protection of the Poles, nor to thoſe who were ſubject to the Turks; and that for the future he ſhould pay the Tartars an annual ſubſidy of forty thouſand ſequins; an odious tribute long ſince impoſed, but from which the czar had delivered his country.

At laſt the treaty was going to be ſigned, without ſo much as making mention of the king of Sweden. All that Poniatowſky could obtain of the vizier was to inſert an article, by which the

czar

czar bound himſelf not to incommode the king in his return. And what is very remarkable, it was ſtipulated in this article, that the czar and Charles ſhould make peace if they thought proper, and could agree upon the terms.

On theſe conditions the czar was permitted to retire with his army, cannon, artillery, colours, and baggage. The Turks ſupplied him with proviſions, and he had plenty of every thing in his camp two hours after the ſigning of the treaty, which was begun, concluded, and ſigned the twenty-firſt of July 1711.

Juſt as the czar, now extricated from this terrible dilemma, was marching off with drums beating and colours flying, the king of Sweden arrived impatient for the fight, and happy in the thoughts of having his enemy in his power. He had rid poſt above fifty leagues from Bender to Jazy. He arrived the very moment that the Ruſſians were beginning to retire in peace; but he could not penetrate to the Turkiſh camp, without paſſing the Pruth by a bridge, three leagues diſtant. Charles XII. who never did any thing like other men, ſwam acroſs the river, at the hazard of being drowned, and traverſed the Ruſſian camp at the riſk of being taken. At length he reached the Turkiſh army, and alighted at the tent of Poniatowſky, who informed me of all theſe particulars, both by letter and word of mouth. The count came to him with a ſorrowful countenance, and told him that he had loſt an opportunity, which perhaps he would never be able to recover.

The king, enflamed with reſentment, flew ſtraight away to the tent of the grand vizier, and

and with a ſtern air, reproached him with the treaty he had made. "I have a right, ſays the grand vizier, with a calm aſpect, either to make peace or war." "But, adds the king, have not you the whole Ruſſian army in your power?" "Our law commands us, replies the vizier with great gravity, to grant peace to our enemies, when they implore our mercy." "And does it command you, reſumes the king in a paſſion, to make a bad treaty, when you may impoſe what laws you pleaſe? had not you a fair opportunity, if you would have embraced it, of leading the czar a priſoner to Conſtantinople?"

The Turk, driven to this extremity, replied very coldly, "And who would have governed his empire in his abſence? It is not proper that all kings ſhould leave their dominions." Charles made no other anſwer, than by a ſmile of indignation. He then threw himſelf down upon a ſopha, and eying the vizier with an air of contempt and reſentment, ſtretched out his leg, and entangling his ſpur in the Turk's robe, purpoſely tore it: after which, he roſe up, remounted his horſe, and with a ſorrowful heart returned to Bender. Poniatowſky continued ſome time longer with the grand vizier, to try if he could not prevail upon him by more gentle means, to extort greater conceſſions from the czar; but the hour of prayer being come, the Turk, without anſwering a ſingle word, went to waſh and attend divine ſervice.

END of the FIFTH BOOK.

ADVERTISEMENT.

IN order to make a pleaſing variety, the proprietors of this work propoſe to give ſometimes a volume of proſe, and ſometimes a volume of dramatic or poetical pieces; but they will be diſtinctly marked on the title page, that the work, when finiſhed, may be bound up in two different ſets; one of which may properly be called his proſe works, and the other his dramatic and poetical works; the laſt of which will include his plays, his Henriade, and all his other poetical pieces.